Abraham Lincoln

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809–1858

In Two Volumes

VOLUME II

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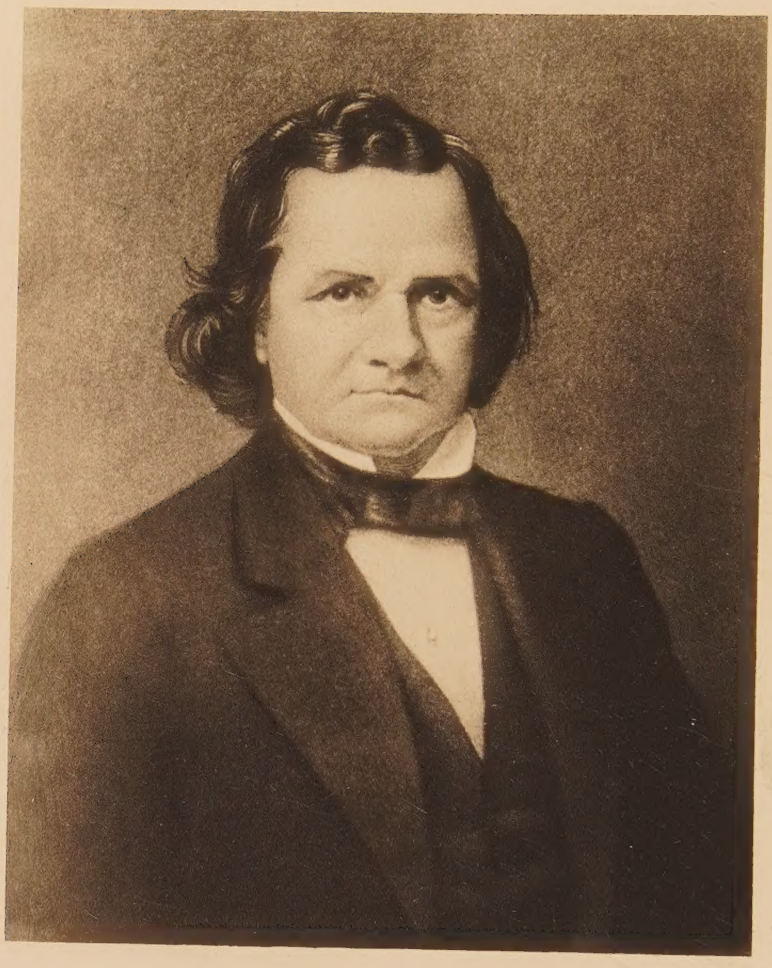

S. A. Douglas

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809–1858

BY

ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE

VOLUME II

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

SEEDS OF WAR: ABOLITION ATTACK AND SOUTHERN DEFENCE

You cannot, sir, indict a people. BURKE.

The Southern people are just what we would be in their situation. LINCOLN: Peoria Speech (1854).

In Dixie's land I'll take my stand,
And live and die in Dixie,
Away, away, away down South in Dixie. *Southern Song.*

FROM afar we now behold the approach of the catastrophe of civil war. We are to witness the spectacle of fewer than six million white people [1] defying more than three times their number, their resources even smaller than their man power, the very spirit of the age against them. High and low, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, men of all stations, callings and professions, are to take the field and fight, suffer and sacrifice with a desperation not often surpassed in the history of the world. Their women are to support them with fearless and heroic devotion.

A sight still more strange is to confront us. Four million slaves, greatly outnumbering the white women, children, and older men left behind, could end the conflict by rising and thus calling back to the rescue officers and privates in the armies; yet these hordes of slaves, even after their emancipation is declared, are to continue to serve the very people who are struggling for a cause of which slavery is an essential part.

What, then, was in the mind and heart of that people which moved them to take a course so fatal and sustained them in

[1] The total number of whites in the States that seceded was about 5,000,000. *Census*, 1860. But to these must be added hundreds of thousands from Kentucky, Missouri, and Maryland who took the field or aided the Confederacy in other substantial ways.

pursuing it? What manner of people were they, what were their ideals, their habit of thought, their mode of life? Mistaken and impossible of permanent success even if temporarily victorious, as all now realize, wrong, as the judgment of mankind has decided it to have been, the struggle of the South for independence was one of the notable phenomena of human experience.

Southern thought and feeling grew ever more solid and ardent during a generation before the South risked her all in the hazard of battle; and knowledge of Southern sentiment is indispensable to an understanding of the controversy to which we are now to listen, of the crisis that will presently develop, of the conflict which finally is to result. Without such knowledge and understanding the historic debates before us are shorn of their meaning, and the words of Webster and Calhoun, of Seward and Davis, of Douglas and Lincoln, lose their significance. Moreover the attitude of Lincoln, before and during the war, otherwise puzzling, is clarified by a comprehension of the Southern point of view and the causes that produced it. Indeed, an understanding of the opinion, feeling, and life of the South is vital to any interpretation of Lincoln's career, which they so profoundly influenced.

Economic reasons for the Southern attitude were powerful; but by themselves they were not determinative. Differences on constitutional questions were almost as strong; yet they were not sufficient to explain all. Expectation of foreign assistance and Northern sympathy, hostility to coercion, and other reasons were factors in the final decision, and these we shall consider when that stirring moment arrives. Indeed coercion and defence against invasion were stronger influences in the hearts of tens of thousands than all those named put together. But through all other motives ran, like living and peculiarly sensitive nerves, the feeling that white supremacy, even social order itself, was in peril. On the part of the South the deepest roots of conflict were racial instinct and conservative character.

Until the time when Lincoln began life for himself among the rude cabins on the Sangamon bluffs, Southern society had remained much as it had been in Washington's day. The same

influence over public opinion by great planters, small in number, or by men of talent even though of humble origin, still prevailed. The sons of the more opulent were sent to Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, and a few to Oxford and Cambridge, as had been the case before and after the Revolution. The daughters were educated by tutors, mostly from the North, or were sent to Northern schools. They were carefully trained by their mothers in the graces and politenesses of life. The plantation mansion was the scene of social gayety as in years gone by.

The planter and his sons led outdoor lives as their fathers had done, riding about the plantation inspecting fields, fences, and ditches, directing overseers, talking with slaves, or hunting on horseback over old fields or through big woods. They were good horsemen and fine shots, loving all sport in the open, given to command, with that curious mingling of sternness and tact, gentleness and dignity which the daily life of the slave-holding planter engendered and nourished.[1] His wife and daughters drove in the family carriage as the women of like station had always done; if a man accompanied them, he commonly rode beside their carriage as an escort. Sir Charles Lyell recorded that the Southern planter's 'usual style of living is that of English country gentlemen.'[2] Family pride was almost a religion with this dominant group;[3] indeed, it extended beyond this

[1] 'The high sense of personal dignity with which the habit of authority and command inspires him [planter], makes him courteous in his manners, liberal in his sentiments, generous in his actions.' *American Quarterly Review*, 1827, as quoted in 'Plantation with Slave Labor and Free': U. B. Phillips, *Am. Hist. Rev.*, xxx, 744.

'The prudence, temper, and decision of character required to manage a plantation successfully is very great.' *Travels in North America in 1841–42:* Sir Charles Lyell, I, 147. Also *A Second Visit to the United States*, 1845: Lyell, I, 262.

Sir Charles Lyell was the most eminent geologist of his day. In his two extended journeys through the United States exclusively for scientific investigation he made note of social and economic conditions and his narrative and comment are perhaps the most impartial records of the South at that time.

[2] *Travels:* Lyell, I, 127, 144. Jan. 13, 1842. S. C. plantation. Also the *Western World:* Alexander Mackay, London, 1849, I, 206. Mackay was a journalist, sent in 1846 to Washington by the *Morning Chronicle* of London to report the debates in Congress on the Oregon question. Mackay had previously spent several years in the United States, and, when Congress adjourned, he made a tour of the country. Thus he wrote the book cited, which was highly regarded for accuracy and impartiality. Decided in his views against slavery, his report of what he saw and heard is unbiased.

[3] Mackay, II, 85–6.

circle and may be said to have been a distinctive element of the social structure of the South.[1]

Through and through this upper stratum of Southern society was favorable to negro slavery — *if* the blacks were to remain in the United States.

The bottom layer of Caucasian society in the South was, in every particular, except that of race, the reverse of the dominant order. This lowest stratum was made up of white people who, steeped in poverty, were, as a class, shiftless, unmoral, without social standing, and devoid of a wish for advancement. These 'poor whites,' as they were called, were found in the pine barrens of the South, usually squatters, and isolated from contact with the surrounding farms and plantations. They were, in part, persons to whom a half-vagabond life among the sandhills and scrub pines of the gentle Southern climate appealed irresistibly.

They lived in log cabins, without floors or windows, often thatched merely with brush and leaves, and filled with dirty, unkempt children.[2] Their most notable characteristic was indolence; they lived from hand-to-mouth, drank much whisky, lounged in the sun, and slept. Many were snuff-dippers, and some were clay-eaters. The women indolently 'tended' small truck patches, while the men spent their time fishing or hunting.[3] They were ignorant, stupid, and incredibly superstitious. They were not attached to the soil, and, at intervals, moved from place to place without apparent reason. Even the slaves

[1] For an extravagantly laudatory description of this class, see *Social Relations in our Southern States:* Daniel Robinson Hundley, 27–70. This author was born near Triana, Ala., but graduated from Harvard Law School, where he went from Bacon College, Harrodsburg, Ky.

[2] Of the poor whites of Georgia Frances Anne (Fanny) Kemble writes: 'These wretched creatures will not, for they are whites (and labour belongs to blacks and slaves alone here), labour for their own subsistence. They are hardly protected from the weather by the rude shelters they frame for themselves in the midst of these dreary woods. Their food is chiefly supplied by shooting the wild fowl and venison, and stealing from the cultivated patches of the plantations nearest at hand. Their clothes hang about them in filthy tatters, and the combined squalor and fierceness of their appearance is really frightful. This population is the direct growth of slavery.' *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation,* 92–3.

[3] Dr. Charles Wardell Stiles in 1902 showed the prevalence of the hookworm disease in areas the poor whites had inhabited for generations and its agency in producing the ills suffered by these squatters — such as clay-eating, resin-chewing and almost unconquerable indolence. See also Buck in *Am. Hist. Rev.,* XXXI, 41.

looked with contempt upon the 'pore white trash;' and they, in turn, had a 'downright envy and hatred of the black man.' [1] They also hated the ruling class venomously, but they regarded it as the rightful source and director of social order and political power.

In spite of these complex cross-currents, the 'poor whites' were, as a class, almost solidly for negro slavery. Mrs. Kemble declared that 'to the crime of slavery, though they have no profitable part or lot in it, they are fiercely accessory, because it is the barrier that divides the black and white races, at the foot of which they lie wallowing in unspeakable degradation, but immensely proud of the base freedom which still separates them from the lash-driven tillers of the soil.' [2] The fact that they were white was their one and only badge of superiority. Deeper than all other considerations was their racial feeling.[3]

Next above the 'poor whites' came the small farmers, or yeomen, most of whom tilled their own limited acres. Now and then they owned one or two slaves. They and their sons worked in the fields along with their black labor, and were very proud of being slave-holders.[4] From this class Calhoun sprang, his father owning a little farm and a single slave. Southern writers said that their farmers were much like the average New England farmer. They wanted to improve their condition and advance that of their children. They were very religious and nearly all belonged to some church.

They, also, were a unit for slavery, *if* the negroes were to

[1] Hundley, 293.

[2] Kemble, 184. 'Fanny' Kemble, the English actress, married Pierce [Mease] Butler, grandson of Senator Pierce Butler of South Carolina, and lived for a time on the Butler plantations in Georgia, regarded as among the best of their type. As mistress of a household her testimony is better than that of the occasional visitor to the South. She was strongly prejudiced against slavery, but was a keen and intelligent observer. Her journal, in the form of letters written from Georgia in the winter and spring of 1838–9, to her friend Elizabeth Dwight Sedgwick, of Massachusetts, is fresh and vivid to-day.

[3] 'Where slavery exists, it is, as Mr. Burke remarks, "not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege" to be free. This remark . . . is peculiarly true of slavery as it is in the southern states. Here the slave is black, and the white man never is a slave. . . . It is certainly well calculated to inspire the humblest white man with a high sense of his own comparative dignity and importance, to see a whole class below him in the scale of society.' Abel P. Upshur in *Southern Literary Messenger*, v, 678 (1839).

[4] Hundley, 197–8.

stay in the South. They did not want the hordes of slaves who surrounded them placed on an equality with themselves.[1] From the yeomanry came most of the overseers of the big plantations.[2]

Another class, chiefly living in the mountains of East Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia, owned no slaves, seldom saw a negro, had little contact with the people of the plains and cities, and felt none of that passionate State pride, which, as we shall see, burned in the hearts of the men and women of the South. They were suspicious, daring, fierce, with native ability undeveloped and untrained because of their isolation and remoteness. On account of their brusque yet furtive manners they made a bad impression on such travellers as penetrated their fastnesses.[3] As an element of the Southern people they were so exceptional, as hardly to be included in an analysis of Southern society. They were for the Nation, rather than the State, for the freedom rather than the bondage of the blacks, and, regarded during the war as Union men, they were to be a thorn in the very heart of the Confederacy.

Between the yeomanry and the great planters was an important social and political stratum, loosely termed the middle class, difficult to define. It furnished lawyers, doctors, and preachers, although the farmers also supplied many Methodist and Baptist pulpits, and sons of great planters also sometimes went into the professions. Teachers and college professors usually came from this rank of Southern society; but here again, the 'best families' also supplied educators. Merchants, too, were generally of this order, as were contractors, bankers, the projectors and builders of railways and canals. So were artisans and me-

[1] *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States:* Frederick Law Olmsted, 573. 'I wouldn't like to hev 'em freed, if they was gwine to hang 'round.' An Alabama farmer to Olmsted, 1853.

Olmsted, the great landscape-gardener, at the age of thirty-one, made a tour on horseback through the South. He was a native of Connecticut, and a graduate of Yale. He was opposed to slavery, but his comment is intelligent, without intentional bias, and trustworthy.

[2] Hundley, 219.

[3] *Slave States of America:* J. S. Buckingham, II, 155–7. This author was a member of Parliament, a temperance lecturer, and a strenuous antagonist of slavery. Accompanied by his wife, he made an extended tour of the Southern States in 1839, and his volumes are fairly accurate.

chanics and many of the well-to-do farmers. Indeed the largest number of this element was agricultural. Jefferson's father was one of these, and the parents of Marshall were from this virile group. Many of the thousands of Northern men in the South were members of this social order, although some of them were allied to the aristocracy. Even the sovereign planters considered the thrifty, energetic, and intelligent middle class as the 'backbone' of the South.

In that class was a conviction that slavery was the only possible relation that could exist between whites and blacks — *if* the two races were to live together peaceably in the same community. Neither the rich planters nor the poor whites were more ardent in support of negro slavery than was this substantial element.[1] After 1830 the intelligence and the entire press of the South came to be the aggressive advocates of that institution.

The more wealthy and cultivated of the middle class helped appreciably in the maintenance of those social circles, the heart of which was the families of great planters. These social groups strongly impressed all European visitors who came in contact with them. Richmond, Savannah, Charleston, Mobile, Natchez, and New Orleans were distinguished in this respect; and smaller towns vied successfully with the cities. Good manners were cultivated for their own sake, courtesy was a habit of life. So striking was this fact that impartial travellers went out of their way to make note of and praise it.

Most of these observers paid especial tribute to the society of Charleston, where the city residences were 'of a dazzling white, with green Venetian blinds,' the verandas 'adorned with vines,' while those in the suburbs were equally beautiful and 'embowered in foliage.'[2] Richmond 'enchanted' Chevalier,[3] although he was 'shocked' by the sight of so many slaves who 'morally, . . . are treated as if they did not belong to the human race.' Yet, he wrote, the Virginian was 'frank, hearty, open, cordial in his

[1] *Society, Manners and Politics in the United States:* Michael Chevalier, 98. Chevalier was sent here by the French Government in 1834 to report upon conditions, and his book, made up of official letters to Thiers, is without prejudice.

[2] Mackay, II, 179. [3] Chevalier, 325–7.

manners, noble in his sentiments, elevated in his notions;' there was 'no place in the world in which he would not appear to advantage;' but he was 'better able to command men than to conquer nature and subdue the soil.' [1]

Buckingham was captivated by Charleston, notwithstanding her hosts of slaves; 'the women were handsomer, more graceful, and more ladylike,' he noted, 'than those of the same classes in the North;' every well-to-do family had a chaise, and the wealthy had as fine carriages and horses as the best in Europe. The veteran traveller declared that in Charleston there was more literary taste than elsewhere in America, and European writers were better known than in Boston 'and with less pretention.' [2]

Buckingham thought that, in general, 'the graceful ease and quiet elegance of Southern families' were in striking contrast with the manners of the North,[3] where, complained Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, 'nobody was still for half a minute.' [4] Mackay was strongly impressed by the people generally of all the seaboard Southern States. 'There is a purity of tone and an elevation of sentiment, together with an ease of manner and a general social aplomb, which are only to be found united in a truly leisure class.' [5]

The wealthy nephew of Napoleon, Achille Murat, who became an American citizen, was ecstatic over Charleston; it was, he declared, 'the city *par excellence* of American society and luxury.' Its social life was 'by far the best' he had seen either in Europe or America — the 'finish . . . and real talents of the men and women' were quite splendid, he declared. In fact, Murat found that 'the manners of the South are elegant to perfection,' especially throughout Virginia.[6] Mackay wrote that it would be

[1] Chevalier, 114–5. [2] Buckingham, I, 74–81.

[3] *Ib.*, 122–6, 148–51.

[4] *Travels in the United States during* 1849 *and* 1850: Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, II, 279. Lady Emmeline travelled a great deal and wrote more, chiefly in verse. Her book on America was made up of letters written to friends during her tour and, later, arranged in the form of a narrative. Although a valuable source, it is obviously partial and her statements, while truthful, are one-sided.

[5] Mackay, I, 207.

[6] *America and the Americans:* Achille Murat, 17, 247. Although intensely partial to the South, this book is a valuable source. Murat was a son of the King of Naples and his

hard to find anywhere 'a more agreeable and hospitable people than those of Charleston;' and the Scotch journalist contrasted them with the brusqueness and 'pretension' of Northern cities. The people of Charleston, with their 'frankness and urbanity,' put the stranger 'completely at his ease,' notwithstanding 'the swarms of negroes' hard at work all about him, albeit, 'singing, whistling or grimacing' as they toil. The city gave tone to the whole State which, socially, was much like Virginia and Maryland.

Even the acidulous English spinster and critic of the South, Harriet Martineau, testified that Charleston 'deserves its renown for hospitality;' and she described the delightful attentions paid to her while a guest of that city in 1833.[1] Would she not stay a month, a year, ten years? She would change her opinion about slavery if she would live in the South for a while,

consort, a sister of Napoleon. He was highly educated in Europe, and came to the United States in his twenty-first year because of the hostility of the Powers to blood relations of his uncle.

After a prolonged tour of the country, he selected Florida as his permanent residence and, being very rich, bought a great estate and built a magnificent house near Tallahassee. Largely through the management of Lafayette on his visit to the United States in 1826, Murat married a grandniece of Washington.

His book, quoted in the text, was compiled after his death from his careful letters to Count Thibaudeau of Belgium. Another work by Murat on the principles of the American government had an immense success in Europe, being translated into many languages and running through more than fifty editions. It was suppressed in Italy and Austria.

[1] *Retrospect:* Martineau, 224–5. Miss Martineau says that six carriages were placed at her disposal by friends of her hostess, servants came to her room every morning for orders, she always found 'some pretty present' sent her each day — a bouquet, a fan, a cambric handkerchief, fruit, a dish of preserves; her meals were sent to her room where a fire was always made when the weather was cool; she joined the family when she pleased; her clothes were neatly placed in a chest of drawers, an article of furniture very rare in America, she declared, etc.

Miss Martineau's writings began to appear when she was thirty years old and, thereafter, poured from the press in incredible quantities. She wrote books, pamphlets and tracts on an amazing variety of subjects — religion, government, economics, sociology, hymnology, revenue and transportation, sickness and health, mesmerism, currency, philosophy, women, forestry, travel, marriage, society, etc. She was prolific in poetry and a reformer of everything. She produced nearly a hundred volumes and besides wrote many articles for magazines and reviews.

Miss Martineau was very deaf and used an ear-trumpet. Although bitterly hostile to slavery and not opposed to the marriage of negroes and whites, she obviously tried to tell the truth.

Three of her volumes are used in this work: *Retrospect of Western Travel,* 1838; *Society in America,* 1837; and *Views of Slavery and Emancipation,* 1837, drawn from *Society in America.*

her host assured her.[1] New Orleans was scarcely less attractive socially to Miss Martineau, although she was horrified to find that 'quadroon connections . . . were all but universal.'[2] She described the houses, the dinners and teas, the small talk, the music, the 'lovely' drives in the country. 'Gardens of roses bewildered the imagination.' Miss Martineau found even the slave quarters pleasing to the eye: 'The cottages of the negroes were embowered in green . . . with thickets of fig and catalpa and rows of Pride-of-India trees.'[3] Mobile was like a dream — 'villas and cottages surrounded with luxuriant growth of Cherokee roses, honeysuckles and myrtles, while groves of orange trees appeared in the background.'[4]

Nor did Miss Martineau find the life of the planter's family in the country and far from a city greatly unlike that in the social centers. Again there were carriages, morning visitors, books, noble houses, bountiful dinners, and young women singing at the piano, fresh bouquets in her room every morning.[5] Yet the wife of a planter 'in the bitterness of her heart' confided to Miss Martineau, 'that a planter's wife was only "the chief slave of the harem."'[6]

But Miss Martineau was surprised by the slave quarters to which the planter's wife took her. 'Your hostess is well-known on the plantation, and her kind face has been recognized at a distance, and already a negro woman has come up to her with seven or eight eggs, for which she knows she will receive a quarter of a dollar. You follow her to the negro quarter, where you see a tidy woman knitting, while the little children who are left in her charge are basking in the sun, or playing all kinds of antics in the road; little shining, plump, clear-eyed children, whose mirth makes you sad when you look around upon their parents and see what these bright creatures are to come to.'[7]

The fervid Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley found New Or-

[1] *Retrospect:* Martineau, 226–7. Mackay recorded that the families of neighbors and other guests would visit for weeks at the house of a big planter. Everybody rode in the morning, went in out of the heat at eleven o'clock, joined in amusement in the late afternoon and devoted the evenings to music and dancing. Mackay, II, 81–2.

[2] *Society in America:* Martineau, I, 80. [3] *Retrospect:* Martineau, 272–6.

[4] *Ib.*, 274. [5] *Ib.*, 216–8. [6] *Society:* Martineau, II, 81.

[7] *Retrospect:* Martineau, I, 218–9; II, 9.

leans and Mobile surrounded by charming villas; and, wherever she went, attractive ladies invariably took her driving in fine carriages. She was especially captivated by the women of Mobile, some of whom she described as among 'the most delightful people in the world.' The plantation house of President Taylor's son near Natchez was 'extremely nice, most tastefully decorated and excellently furnished, the walls covered with prints' and the whole house 'scrupulously neat and clean.' Like Miss Martineau, Lady Emmeline was surprised by the appearance of the slave children. 'It cannot be imagined how nice and clean they looked. . . . Such good natured, raven roly-polies, I never saw collected together before.' Yet even on this estate she saw slaves almost white, a sight that met the eye of all travellers in the South.[1]

Northern visitors were scarcely less laudatory. Joseph Holt Ingraham, the author, when a young man writing his pirate stories, told with the enthusiastic fancy of youth and obvious partiality of his visit to the South in 1834. A plantation in Louisiana was, to him, a vision of beauty; and its loveliness was enhanced by the neat slave cottages clustered in a square of magnolias under which negro children gambolled.[2] Yet even the romantic and infatuated young New Englander admitted that, out in the country, he did find a front yard of a rich planter filled with cattle, sheep, horses, dogs, pickaninnies and chickens; the master sitting on the veranda, without coat, vest or shoes, his feet on the railing and playing, 'in high glee' with negro children; while his nephew of fourteen lay asleep in a hammock, a 'strapping negress' waving over him a plume of pea-fowl feathers to keep away the flies. Still, he contended, the interior of such establishments was always 'elegant.'[3]

Ingraham was equally pleased with the country social life of Mississippi. Because of the education and manners of the

[1] Stuart-Wortley, I, 218–9, 235–6, 250–8; II, 153.

[2] *The Southwest, by a Yankee:* Joseph Holt Ingraham, I, 80–2. N.Y., 1835. Ingraham was a native of Maine, a sailor, and participated in a South American revolution. He became professor of languages in a Southern institution. At the time he wrote the *Southwest* he was an opponent of slavery, but even more of abolitionism; after living several years in Mississippi he became a strong supporter of slavery.

[3] *Ib.*, II, 98–100.

daughters of planters 'every village can draw around it a polished circle of its own,' and even on remote plantations 'elegant women may often be found blooming in the depths of forests far in the interior.' [1]

In short, the foreign traveller and Northern visitor, nearly all of whom were opposed to slavery, wrote glowingly of the better classes in the cities and on the plantations of the South; and all of these observers made particular mention of the accomplishments of Southern women. Some impartial investigators, however, were not so enchanted. In 1853, Olmsted, for instance, found Richmond women 'fair, refined and serene' but without the old-time Virginia 'dignity and stateliness,' while the men, although tall and animated, were not sturdy and robust.[2] While Charleston looked old, it had 'adopted the requirements of modern luxury with an ill grace;' and the white laboring class were as closely packed and lived in as much 'filth and squalor' as workingmen in the North, and showed more brutality and ruffianism than their Northern brothers.

Moreover the military atmosphere annoyed Olmsted — the drumming, the parading, the cannon in place, the citadel and 'especially, the numerous armed-police.' [3] Mrs. Kemble admitted that the manners of Southern men, judged by English standards, were 'infinitely better' than those of the North, but asserted that upon more familiar acquaintance the men showed 'haughty overbearing irritability, effeminate indolence, reckless extravagance, and a union of profligacy and cruelty, which is the immediate result of their irresponsible power over their dependents.' [4] The dominant bearing of Southern men, their quick-

[1] Ingraham, I, 207–9.

[2] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 50.

[3] *Ib.*, 404.

[4] Kemble, 392. She states, however, elsewhere: 'But the devil must have his due, and men brought up in habits of peremptory command over their fellow men, and under the constant apprehension of danger, and awful necessity of immediate readiness to meet it, acquire qualities precious to themselves and others in hours of supreme peril.' *Ib.*, 378–9.

'It is only under a system, which promotes a laxity of habits, blunts the moral perceptions, engenders leisure, and fosters pride, that could arise those quick resentments, that morbid sensitiveness, that false sense of honour, that proneness to quarrel, and that indifference to human life, which so broadly distinguish genuine society in the South from the Anglo-Saxon type which it has preserved in the North. There is something un-

ness to fight and other characteristics impressed Miss Martineau unfavorably; but, she wrote, 'what can be expected from little boys who are brought up to consider physical courage the highest attribute of manhood; pride of section and of caste its loftiest grace.' [1]

Such, in general, was Southern society when the acrimonious controversy to which we are now to listen may be said to have begun. Except the mountain farmers, the people of the South were practically unanimous for slavery; provided — always provided — that the negro was to continue to abide among them. Upon that point there was sharp division. Many thought that the negroes should be emancipated — but deported, colonized in Africa from whence they came.[2] And nearly all — even the defenders of slavery as a permanent institution — believed that slave conditions should be ameliorated and the blacks improved in every way consistent with their dependent and subordinate station.

But freed! Made social and political equals with the white race, and still live alongside white men and women in the same place? Never! In the Senate in 1839, Clay thus expressed Southern feeling: 'In the slave States the alternative is, that the white man must govern the black, or the black govern the white.' [3]

The slaves were about as they had been when Washington was President — the same plantation discipline, the same white overseers, the same 'drivers' who nearly always were slaves themselves, the same negro characteristics. There were, too, the same class distinctions, among the blacks, which were so noticeable in former times — in fact, social lines among the slaves were more rigid than among the whites. The slaves of a rich planter, or of a politically or socially prominent master, were absurdly proud of their connection with greatness and power, and would have nothing to do with fellow bondsmen who were

favourable to the development of the better feelings of our nature, when the mind becomes reconciled to a monstrous violation of the laws of nature.' Mackay, II, 136.

[1] *Society:* Martineau, II, 88.

[2] The colonization scheme encountered some bitter hostility in the South.

[3] Speech in Senate, Feb. 7, 1839. *Works*, VIII, 151.

owned by the poor or inconspicuous. Neither would house servants recognize field hands; while all slaves also estimated their social standing by their value in the market.[1]

In describing the condition of the slaves, casual visitors were at a disadvantage and even long residence could not make them acquainted with more than local conditions. In the border states — Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky and Tennessee — the worse features of slavery had almost disappeared.[2] The want of slave crops and the pressure of competition from the neighboring free states, had done much to soften the harsher aspects of slave relations. In the more southern states the distinction between city and interior, between house servants and field hands was marked, and the more obvious treatment given to house hands created an atmosphere which is in part responsible for the romantic and sentimental accounts of the travellers. On large plantations — cotton and sugar — the more forbidding conditions of slavery became apparent, and this was especially the case where the overseer ruled in place of the absentee owner and large numbers of slaves were herded under the control of one white man, absolute in his rule and liable to the evils which uncontrolled power gave.[3]

Most of the slaves, it was claimed, were care-free and content;[4] but among them were some who were rebellious, others who were quarrelsome, some who were criminals by nature.

[1] Ingraham, II, 30–2.

[2] In their report on the condition of American churches in 1833–4, the English clergymen, Reed and Matheson, said that Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky were then 'prepared for emancipation' and that Maryland was 'resolved on it.' *Narrative of the Visit to the American Churches:* Andrew Reed, D.D. and James Matheson, D.D., London, 1835, II, 264–5.

[3] Kemble, 388.

[4] 'Even freedom is scarcely a blessing to him [the slave], for the eternal brand is upon his face — his caste is irrevocably fixed — and although he may cease to acknowledge a master, he can never cease to belong to the lowest class of mankind. . . . Freedom is no boon to them, since it brings with it all the cares and difficulties of self-dependence, without any of the usual advantages of independence in thought and action. The African slave is contented from necessity. He has no motive to quarrel with a lot which he knows he cannot change, and the burthens of which are best relieved by a cheerful discharge of the duties which attend them. . . . In no part of the world has the laboring class been more distinguished for contentment, cheerfulness, and even gaiety; and such the negro slave will always be, if he be not taught to feel or to imagine other evils than those which his condition itself imposes on him.' Upshur, 686.

Punishment was the same kind as that administered in colonial times — whip, shackle, stock, solitary confinement. If employed unreasonably or immoderately, force had a bad effect upon the temper and morale of the negroes. When dissatisfied or resentful they did not work steadily or well, and the plantation was not so productive.[1] Wholly aside from the impulses of humanity, economic results constituted a powerful restraint to harsh treatment of any unit of the planter's working force.[2] Yet there were numerous cases of brutality and vile conduct by overseers and even by masters.[3] It was a curious fact that the poor man who owned but two or three slaves was far harsher in his treatment of them than were the great planters.

Slaves sometimes ran away just as they had done in the time of Washington, who had signed the first fugitive slave bill. It was this statute that the owners of runaway slaves invoked and which the antagonists of slavery so furiously denounced and sought to nullify, until the enactment of the harsher law of 1850. In spite of a high death-rate the negroes were prolific and rapidly increased in numbers, even after the importation of slaves legally ceased in 1808.[4]

The Southern people took the existence of slavery as a matter of course. They had been born among slaves as their fathers and mothers had been for several generations. It was an immemorial relation. Nothing seemed to be more natural. Nor generally did the sale of slaves appear to them to be wrong. For at least two

[1] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 198. 'That slaves . . . very frequently can not be made to do their master's will, I have seen much evidence. . . . When they are directed to do anything for which they have a disinclination, they undertake it in such a way that the desired result is sure not to be accomplished.'

[2] See Phillips in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, xxx, 740–4.

[3] Slavery 'appears in its true light, in its real character, in all its revolting atrocities, in the cotton-growing States. Whatever hideousness may be imparted to it by severity of toil and brutality of treatment, it there assumes without a mask. . . . The candour of every American citizen who has travelled in the South will bear me out in the assertion, that, in the practical working of slavery in the cotton-growing districts, humanity is the exception, and brutality the rule.' Mackay, II, 125. For the other side see *American Negro Slavery:* Ulrich B. Phillips, 293, 306.

[4] Fanny Kemble describes the infant mortality on the Butler plantation and gives many instances of the waste involved. Of a number of pregnant women who came to ask for a longer interval of rest after child-bearing she wrote: 'All these women had had large families, and *all* of them had lost half their children, and several of them had lost more.' Kemble, 220–1, 232, and the individual cases on 240–3.

centuries the traffic had been going on in the South, and the Southern mind was accustomed to it. Thus while the demand for slave labor following the application of steam and machinery to the cotton industry prodigiously increased the demand for slaves and resulted in slave-breeding to supply the ever increasing market, even that repellent industry shocked but few of the Southern people, and was taken as a matter of course by them.

Much of their inheritances and the larger portion of their investments were in slaves, and to a far greater extent than had been the case with their ancestors. Why should they not dispose of their property as their fathers had done? they asked. Yet many slave-holders thought slavery to be a moral wrong, more felt it to be vexatious and annoying, others considered it to be an economic error, and still others believed it to be debasing to the character of white owners.[1] Here and there, indeed, slave-holders emancipated their negroes, and from this source sprang the free blacks, who by reproduction became numerous.

Southern sentiment for emancipation was neither wide-spread nor vehement. During the first decades of the Republic, it found expression, as in the notable debates in the Legislature of Virginia in 1831–32, but never took form in legislation. The occasion for these debates was the famous Nat Turner Insurrection in Southampton County during August, 1831. Nat Turner was a slave, whose master had taught him to read and write, and as a Baptist preacher with these accomplishments had acquired great influence over the negroes of the countryside. Turner went about secretly telling the blacks of the bloody glories of their race in Santo Domingo, and he finally aroused them to emulate the atrocities of their brethren on that island.

The uprising was planned for a time when most white men were absent from the vicinity at a camp-meeting. On August 22,

[1] 'Of a truth, there exists a free people even in the Southern slave States, who are silently laboring in the work of emancipation.' *America of the Fifties: Letters:* Fredrika Bremer, 131. Miss Bremer was a Swedish novelist who visited the United States in 1849 and her letters giving her impressions were printed in two volumes, *Homes of the New World* (1853), and a selection of the letters in 1924 in the work named above. An ardent Abolitionist, she yet declared: 'That which the North testifies against the South I will not believe; but that which the South testifies against itself I am compelled to believe.' Bremer, 110.

Turner and his band murdered sixty-one whites, nearly all of whom were women and children. Savage barbarities were committed. The negroes went wild with ferocity and bathed their arms in blood.[1]

While at first it was believed that Turner was merely insane and the Southampton uprising due solely to his crazed influence over his credulous and superstitious followers, a view developed later that Northern Abolitionists were at the bottom of the horror. Governor John Floyd of Virginia so declared in his message to the Legislature in December, 1831. Negro preachers, he said, were easily incited to stir up trouble; and he had reason to think that 'unrestrained fanatics' from other States had so worked upon the diseased mind of Nat Turner. He urged the Legislature to pass more repressive slave laws.[2] So came about the heated and picturesque debate at Richmond during the winter of 1831–32.

The Nat Turner insurrection had a peculiar and vivid meaning to Southern people, scarcely realized in the North. The massacre of the whole white population of Santo Domingo by negroes and mulattoes, after they had been emancipated and had taken charge of the government, was ever present in Southern minds.[3] They contrasted the peace, order, and pro-

[1] *The Nat Turner Insurrection:* Richmond, 1831. Turner and such of his followers as were captured, were regularly tried in Richmond, convicted, and executed during September and October, 1831.

[2] Message of Governor John Floyd to the General Assembly of Virginia, Dec. 6, 1831. *House Journal*, 1831–2, 9–10.

[3] There were two negro uprisings in Santo Domingo: the first on Aug. 23, 1791; the second, involving the wholesale butchery of white people, which so horrified and alarmed the South, was in August, 1804.

There had been slave uprisings before that of Nat Turner, as the plot of Denmark Vesey, a free negro, in Charleston, in 1822.

The South feared the slaves in spite of brave words to the contrary. James McDowell, Jr., speaking in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1832 on the Nat Turner uprising, said bluntly that the terror inspired by that occasion arose from the '*suspicion eternally attached to the slave himself;* the suspicion that a Nat Turner might be in every family.' Another delegate, Henry Berry, predicted that a '*death-struggle must come between the two classes, in which one or the other will be extinguished forever.*' *Slave Insurrections:* Joshua Coffin, 32–3.

'I know that the southern men are apt to deny the fact that they do live under an habitual sense of danger; but a slave population, coerced into obedience, though unarmed and half fed, *is* a threatening source of constant insecurity, and every southern *woman* to whom I have spoken on the subject, has admitted to me that they live in terror of their slaves.' Kemble, 379.

sperity of that island while slavery prevailed, to the slaughter, pillage, rapine, and economic desolation that followed negro freedom, and they firmly believed that a similar fate would befall the South under the same condition. And here, said many, was proof of it — the Southampton tragedy was but the first spark of a conflagration like that of Santo Domingo, which would occur throughout the South if the slaves should be freed, or if Abolitionists were allowed to 'scatter their firebrands.' [1]

On the other hand so strong had become the sentiment in Virginia in 1832 against slavery that some of the House of Delegates boldly advocated emancipation.[2] Yet within three years few could be found in the South who would express, openly at least, such an opinion. The cause of this speedy and extreme development of Southern thought and feeling was the abolition assault, which, *as an organized movement*, began in 1830.

The number of the Abolitionists is unknown, but it was probably greater than has been supposed. Clay declared in the Senate that by 1850 they dominated both political parties in the North; but this was really because each party strove to capture the anti-slavery vote in order to carry local and State elections. Whatever their numerical strength, they led the anti-slavery and anti-Southern movement; they sounded the aggressive note. All Southern writers, statesmen, and politicians thought that abolitionism was the source of Northern hostility to slavery and to the South itself; and, as will presently appear, every

[1] 'We of the South are emphatically surrounded . . . by a dangerous class of beings — degraded, stupid savages,' who would repeat Santo Domingo, if they were made to believe that death would not follow their insurrection. *Maryville* (Tenn.) *Intelligencer* as quoted in *The Constitution, a Pro-Slavery Compact:* Wendell Phillips, Abolition pamphlet, 3d ed., 208.

[2] Few of them, however, suggested that the blacks should remain in Virginia after they were freed. Thomas Roderick Dew, in *Pro-Slavery Argument*, 420–1. When he wrote this essay, which became the basis of Southern literature on slavery, Dew was thirty-one years old and was professor of Metaphysics and Political Economy in William and Mary College, of which he finally became President. One of the most brilliant of Southern scholars, he was very frail physically, and died in Paris in his forty-second year, while abroad on his honeymoon.

Pro-Slavery Argument, published in 1852, contained essays of four leading Southern authorities on slavery, Professor Dew, Senator Hammond of South Carolina, William Harper, and William Gilmore Simms. It was regarded at the time as the best defence of slavery.

Simms was outstanding in American literature and foremost among the writers produced by the South before the war.

essay, pamphlet, and book on the subject, without exception, whether written by Southern or Northern men, as well as every speech by any spokesman of the South during the period we are now considering, was largely in reply to assertions of abolition crusaders. Had it not been for what they said and did and the fear and anger they aroused, it is not altogether impossible that there would have been no war and that slavery would in time have given way to the pressure of economic forces. Sharp distinction must be made between the Abolitionists and all other anti-slavery forces such as the Free-Soilers.[1] Yet in the mind of the South, abolitionism finally came to represent the Northern attitude.

Lincoln was well advised of abolition activities. As we have seen, the whole subject was brought before him in startling fashion at the second session of the Legislature of Illinois to be attended by him, and thereafter it was thoroughly debated at least twice while he was a member of the General Assembly of his State.

Although keeping his membership in the Whig Party, Herndon was an Abolitionist at heart and said so; and no man or woman in the whole country was a more passionate votary of Theodore Parker. He bought all the abolition literature on which he could lay his hands, and he and Lincoln read and discussed it together. This fact is of the greatest possible moment in the development of Lincoln's opinions, and of the origin of memorable language spoken by him.[2]

[1] Before 1840 the terms abolition and anti-slavery were not clearly defined; but after 1840 an Abolitionist was one who sought anti-slavery ends outside of established parties, and after 1848 the name applied only to followers of William Lloyd Garrison or Gerrit Smith.

[2] 'I was in correspondence with Sumner, Greeley, Phillips, and Garrison, and was thus thoroughly imbued with all the rancor drawn from such strong anti-slavery sources. . . . Every time a good speech on the great issue was made I sent for it . . . of Giddings, Phillips . . . and one whom I considered grander than all the others — Theodore Parker. . . .

'I purchased all the leading histories of the slavery movement, and other works which treated on that subject,' and Lincoln and Herndon read and discussed them together. Herndon, II, 363.

'I take Garrison's *Liberator* and he [Lincoln] takes the *National Era* and the *Western Citizen*.' Herndon's statement to Zebina Eastman, editor of the *Western Citizen* (Chicago), organ of the Liberty Party west of the Ohio, in Blanchard's *History of Illinois*, as quoted in *Lincoln and Herndon:* Joseph Fort Newton, 62 *n.*

The first anti-slavery society in Illinois was that of Putnam County, formed in 1835,

From the time of the Nat Turner atrocities, the abolition assault grew in violence; and, as the years passed, it raged with ever increasing fury. Abolition tracts, pamphlets, speeches, and appeals poured from the presses in swelling streams. 'On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation,' said Garrison in the first number of the *Liberator*. In the immense volume of abolition literature the principal variation was in the violence of the language used. Only extravagant terms can give an idea of its vituperation. So was produced that counterpart of the Northern Abolitionist, the Southern 'fire-eater,' of whom, in due course, we shall hear much. When the abolition crusade had progressed for some years, Clay, in the Senate, bitterly denounced its writings and tactics. These 'incendiaries' wished to 'array one portion against another portion of the Union;' their prints and pamphlets were the faggots of hatred. Such was Clay's opinion in 1839.[1]

Like his great leader, Lincoln deplored the violence of the agitation, and on no single point did he agree with abolition methods or principles. Those who wonder at his silence on the question for long years, may find the explanation in the character of the abolition assault. Yet he did not denounce it, and, as we shall see, the radical Herndon made shift to capture the abolition vote for his partner and idol.

In general, abolition writers and speakers said and wrote substantially the same thing. At first the attack was almost entirely on moral and religious grounds; for many years the economic phase was scarcely noticed by the Abolitionists. It was a sin-hunting age, a period of rigid moral formulas when the absolutist of right and wrong issued decrees with uncompromising intolerance. Abolitionism, said Calhoun in 1837, 'originated

and three years later thirteen reported to the National Anti-Slavery Convention. The number increased in the years following and almost all were in Northern counties of the State.

Four journals devoted to the abolition or anti-slavery cause were established in Illinois before 1848: Lovejoy's *Observer* of Alton (1837); Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation* of Lowell (1838); Eastman's *Genius of Liberty* of Lowell, which in 1842 became the *Western Citizen* of Chicago; and with the Free-Soil Party came the *Tribune* of Chicago (1847). No account is made here of the short-lived papers which started after 1842. *Liberty and the Free Soil Parties in the Northwest:* Theodore Clarke Smith, 320; *Newspapers and Periodicals of Illinois*, 1814–1879: Franklin W. Scott, lxxv, *n.*

[1] Feb. 7, 1839. *Works*, VIII, 142–3.

in that blind, fanatical zeal which made one man believe that he was responsible for the sins of others; and which, two centuries ago, tied the victim that it could not convert to the stake.' [1]

Slavery was a sin, accursed of God; black and white were brothers and equals,[2] and any man-made law that prevented that equality and brotherhood was a violation of the ordinances of Heaven. Of these divine statutes the Abolitionists devoutly believed that they were the chosen interpreters and guardians.[3]

American institutions, too, were irreconcilable with slavery, they declared. Did not the Declaration of Independence assert the self-evident truth that all men are created equal? The whole system of slavery produced an oligarchy, a ruling caste, destructive of American principles; and this charge was with some at the North more potent than the moral indictment.[4] And how did that satanic group, which not only ruled the South but the Nation, maintain itself? Chiefly by the Constitutional provision for counting three-fifths of the slaves in computing the basis of representation in Congress. The Abolitionists were so engrossed in their crusade against slavery as a sin, however, that they did not make of this a major argument; but Northern politicians and those who, without being formally Abolitionists, opposed slavery and disliked the South, used it as the basis of their most effective appeal.

With the strength of a mighty and flaming obsession Abolitionists shouted that all slave-holders were thieves, robbers, man-stealers, enemies of God and the Republic — paupers, but for the toil of slaves on which they lived. 'We must deliver our country from the government of these *Tyrant Paupers*.' [5]

[1] Speech, Dec. 27, 1837. *Works*, III, 152.

[2] *A Protest against Slavery*, 173 Unitarian Ministers, Abolition pamphlet, Boston, 1845, 3. 'Three millions of our Slaves, fellow men and brethren' in slavery.

[3] 'Servants of God most high,
Who on his word rely,' etc.
Anti-Slavery Poems: John Pierpont, 46, Abolition pamphlet, Boston, 1843.

[4] Hundley testified that he found anti-slavery men in the North, not Abolitionists, who were not so much influenced by the sin of bondage, since the Bible sanctioned it, as by the reputed existence of a 'Southern oligarchy' which they hated. Southern writers replied that it was the same 'oligarchy' which flourished at the time of the Revolution, and insisted that it was not exclusive, since any white man could become a member. Hundley, 68–9.

[5] *The Tyrant Paupers:* Emancipation Extra, Abolition pamphlet, 1843.

With knotted scourge the slave-holder drove men and women to heart-breaking and endless toil, charged the Abolitionists. The slaves were underfed, often half-starved, and their shelters were hovels unfit for beasts. So-called punishment was, in reality, unprovoked assaults upon innocent and unoffending persons. Slaves were hunted like wild animals, torn by dogs, flogged to death, stabbed with knives. Their teeth were broken, ears cut off, eyes knocked out, and spiked iron collars were fastened about their necks. Tales of torture, murder, lust so gross, bestial, and revolting that the wantonness of savage cruelty was surpassed, were printed with detailed particulars.[1]

Seemingly these revelations of horror were not sufficiently convincing to the doubtful, for the abolition propagandists were taunted for their want of trustworthy evidence and even denounced by the unbelieving as plain and wilful liars. Dr. Charles G. Parsons of Maine, a lecturer on abolition, spent more than a year in Georgia, and wrote a book purporting to give an account of his experiences. The evils of slavery could not be seen in Northern slave States or in Southern cities and towns, he wrote; slaves were taught to lie about their condition, admitting contentment and happiness which they did not feel; [2] planters and business men wilfully deceived visitors; [3] good men in the South were kept ignorant of the infamies practised all around them.[4]

Parsons reported that he personally saw and heard things as revolting as those described in the most dreadful pages of abolition literature, and that he was credibly informed of practices still more infamous. He alleged that the personal habits of Southern white men were in keeping with their brutality to

[1] *American Slavery as it is: The Testimony of 1000 Witnesses*, Abolition Booklet, issued by the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1839.

This compilation contained numerous accounts by those who claimed to be eye-witnesses of ghastly atrocities.

[2] *Inside view of Slavery; or a Tour among the Planters:* Charles G. Parsons, M.D., 18–9, 30–1, Abolition book, Boston, 1855. He believed slavery and intemperance to be the two great evils of the South. Parsons claimed to have relatives and influential friends among the planters.

[3] *Ib.*, 33–6. When Sir Charles Lyell, in Boston, said that he had seen 'little actual suffering' in the South, an Abolitionist told him that he had been deceived. *Second Visit:* Lyell, II, 78.

[4] Parsons, 57–61.

slaves — indolence, gambling, drunkenness, brawling, fighting, murdering; and all of these were the natural accompaniments of slavery. Indeed such statements constituted quite as much an indictment of the Southern people as an attack on slavery.[1]

Slaves were denied education, denied religion, denied everything that could enlighten and uplift them, the Abolitionists declared. Worse still! 'We have men sold to build churches, women sold to support the gospel, and babes sold to purchase Bibles for the poor heathen,' wrote Frederick Douglass.[2] Families were torn asunder — husband, wife, children, separated forever upon the auction block, in the slave pen.[3] This was the basest infamy but one, which the slave system had produced. That ultimate depth of vileness was miscegenation, into which planters, their sons, overseers, slave-holders, slave-dealers, and white men in general, forced negro and mulatto girls and women.[4]

This was the principal count of the abolition indictment; and it was dwelt upon with repetitious and terrible insistence.[5] Impartial investigators reported instances sustaining the truth of the charge.[6] Others grossly exaggerated. 'The South,' exclaimed

[1] Parsons, 46–51, 136–49, 152–290.

[2] Douglass's Narrative as quoted in *Slavery and the Slaveholder's Religion:* Samuel Brooke, Abolition pamphlet, 1846, 69.

[3] *The Slave Auction:* Dr. John Theophilus Kramer, Abolition pamphlet, Boston, 1859. For an instance happening without the intervention of the auction, see Kemble, 123–31.

[4] *Anti-Slavery Catechism:* Lydia Maria Child, 15. All Abolition literature and the records of travellers in the South laid emphasis upon this practice.

[5] Miss Martineau was among the first to give wide currency to this repellent topic. 'The licentiousness of the South takes the women of colour for its victims.' *Retrospect,* I, 234. William Gilmore Simms wrote a review of her book and on her chapter dealing with miscegenation said: 'It is painful, because it is full of truth. . . . The truth — though it is not all truth — is quite enough to sustain her and it.' *Pro-Slavery Argument,* 228–9. The charges angered the South, and another reviewer of Miss Martineau's volumes denounced her general attack upon slavery as the 'tirade' of an 'amalgamationist of the foulest kind.' *Southern Literary Messenger,* IV, 342.

'This is a favorite theme with the abolitionists, male and female. Folios have been written about it,' and Senator Hammond of South Carolina adds: 'I wish the topic could be avoided.' James Henry Hammond in *Pro-Slavery Argument,* 117–8.

In 1868 Stephens described Hammond as 'one of the most intellectual men this country has ever produced.' *Constitutional View of the War between the States:* Alexander H. Stephens, II, 83. He was an ardent upholder of slavery, and the author of some of the strongest arguments in support of it. The many citations of Senator Hammond, hereafter made, are from *Pro-Slavery Argument.*

[6] Thus Olmsted, writing of New Orleans, testified that in 1853, a planter told him that

Wendell Phillips, 'is one great brothel, where half a million of women are flogged to prostitution.' [1] That section, said Mrs. Child, was for negro slavery because of the love of 'unbridled licentiousness and despotic control.' [2] The greed of the slaveholder was equal to his lust; he sold his own children. 'The blood of orators, statesmen, generals, and even presidents, flows in the veins of thousands who are bought and sold like mules and horses.' [3] So debasing was the system that the poor whites sometimes sold their children to slave-traders.[4]

Slave women were 'doomed to a life of universal prostitution and concubinage,' wrote Stephen S. Foster, and added that, because the General Conference of the Methodist Church had refused to condemn slavery in 1836 and 1840, 'every intelligent communicant' in that denomination was worse than 'the common prostitute, the pickpocket, or the assassin.' Since there were fifty thousand female members of the Methodist Church who, according to Foster, were forced to lead immoral lives, that Church was 'more corrupt than any house of ill-fame in the city of New York.' The sole reason Methodist preachers in the South were for slavery was, he charged, that they could get concubines for themselves. Foster claimed to speak only in love and kindness.[5]

Other pamphleteers were even more radical. For an extreme example, the Rev. George Bourne published tales of Southern

miscegenation was so prevalent that he intended to leave the South — 'there is not a likely-looking black girl in this State, that is not the paramour of a white man;' another, that he had his boys educated in the North because they could not be brought up at home 'in decency.'

A Mrs. Douglas, convicted of teaching slaves to read, wrote Olmsted from her jail, that amalgamation was 'one great evil hanging over the Southern Slave States. . . . This, and this only, causes the vast extent of ignorance, degradation and crime, that lies like a black cloud over the whole South. . . . It pervades the entire society.' *Slave States:* Olmsted, 601–2.

Buckingham, II, 213–4, gives an instance and adds that Southerners denied this practice, but he believed it to be very general and beyond doubt.

[1] *Speeches, Lectures and Addresses:* Wendell Phillips, 108.

[2] Child, 35.

[3] G. M. Weston, quoted in *American Slavery and Colour:* William Chambers, 2–3. English Abolition book, 1857.

[4] *Ib.*, 3. Chambers was a Scotch writer and publisher, an ardent Abolitionist and he wrote on slavery and the South wholly from that point of view.

[5] *The Brotherhood of Thieves:* Stephen S. Foster, Abolition pamphlet, Boston, 1844.

miscegenation which cannot be reproduced at the present time.[1] In general, he asserted, slave girls were reared and sold 'expressly for concubinage and the manufacture of light colored slaves.' Drunken buyers attended girl slave markets and, with foul obscenities, examined prospective purchases. Nothing was beyond the infamy of the slave-holder — the master defiled his own daughters, the son his own sisters and their mother, and men sold their daughters to be mistresses.[2]

Bourne contended that miscegenation with negroes was not confined to Southern men; that slave mothers, in revenge for the ruin of their girls, managed similar affairs between young slaves and the daughters of their owners; and he described an instance of it with particularity, yet in such general terms, that it could be applied to any plantation in the South. Southern women were worse than 'female seducers and panderers for debauchees,' because they were 'privy to all the violations which pass around them.' When retribution came, as it was bound to do, 'southern women may be assured that they will have no adequate defenders from the north.' [3]

Southern pulpits were often filled by 'man-stealing, girl-selling, pimping, and slave-manufacturing preachers,' Bourne charged, and the Southern churches under ministers who defended such practices were a 'synagogue of Satan.' It would be better '*to transfer the inmate from the State prison, and the pander from the brothel to the pulpit,*' than to permit such a minister to preach in a Northern church.[4] The abolition assault on Southern clergymen was more virulent than the at-

[1] *Slavery illustrated in its Effects upon Women and Domestic Society:* George Bourne, Abolition pamphlet, 1837. This pamphlet was published anonymously by Isaac Knapp, Boston. Bourne was an Englishman who came to the United States when a young man and had lived in Virginia. He was one of the most aggressive of the Abolitionists.

Garrison said that next to the Bible he was most indebted to a pamphlet of Bourne's, *The Book and Slavery Irreconcilable* (1815). *William Lloyd Garrison:* By his Children, I, 306. The great emancipationist declared of Bourne in the *Liberator:* 'Bourne thunders and lightens.' *Ib.*, 461.

[2] Bourne, 62–4.

Richard Hildreth, the journalist and author, wrote a novel, *The Slave or Memoir of Archy Moore,* in which the woes of the slave daughter of her aristocratic master, a 'brilliantly beautiful girl,' were set forth in shocking and pathetic detail. The first edition of this novel appeared in 1836; sixteen years later it was again published under the title of *The White Slave.*

[3] Bourne, 72–4, 101–2. [4] *Ib.*, 105, 116–7. Italics Bourne's.

tack on any other body of men in the South, and it lighted and fed flames of wrath in the hearts of Southern ministers which decades and generations of time did not extinguish.

When asked if she would not prevent the marriage of a negro to a white, Miss Martineau replied 'that I would never, under any circumstances, try to separate persons who really loved.' [1] She related that women of Baltimore denounced the English novelist, Miss Edgeworth, because in her book, *Belinda*, 'poor Juba [a negro] was married . . . to an English farmer's daughter;' and, continued Miss Martineau, 'a clergyman's lady threw the volume to the opposite corner of the floor when she came to the page.' [2] In 1839 Clay declared in the Senate, that Abolitionists favored amalgamation; and, from that time forward, this was a favorite charge of their opponents. As we shall see, it was constantly hurled at Lincoln who repelled it with ardor, for he was as much opposed to amalgamation as he was to abolitionism.

No wonder slaves ran away! They ought to run away, said the Abolitionists; ought, indeed, to assert by force in the South itself their God-given right of liberty! 'It is the right and duty of the slaves to gain and defend their freedom; it is the right and duty of the North to incite and help them to freedom.' [3] Chambers reported with praise that a single Abolitionist whom he had met, had helped nearly two thousand negroes to leave their masters and go to the free States or Canada.[4] Chevalier wrote that, while he was in Richmond in 1834, '40 or 50 slaves disappeared, and there is no doubt that the fanatics of Philadelphia or New England furnished them the means of flight.' [5]

One of the most effective features of abolition propaganda was the reproduction of advertisements of runaway slaves published in Southern newspapers.[6] 'Go tell these slave-breeders and

[1] *Retrospect:* Martineau, I, 139–40. Miss Martineau further said that the case put by her questioner was 'one not likely to happen as I believed the blacks were no more disposed to marry the whites than the whites to marry the blacks.' For this answer, the Philadelphia woman promptly replied: 'You are an amalgamationist.'

[2] *Retrospect:* Martineau, I, 141.

[3] Henry C. Wright to Garrison in the 'Natick Resolutions,' Abolition pamphlet.

[4] Chambers, 118. [5] Chevalier, 155.

[6] *American Slavery as it is*, 62–3. These advertisements were made note of by all travellers through the South. Dickens printed some in his *American Notes*.

slave drivers that, when the slaves shall bid defiance to their enslavers, and insurrections, massacre, murder, rape and rapine cover the South, and the cries of the white victims of the slaves' vengeance arise for mercy, the slaves and their friends, the non-slave-holding whites, are only practising on their teachers the lessons they so faithfully and diligently taught them.' [1] The maledictions upon their former masters by fugitive slaves were printed and scattered broadcast by anti-slavery propagandists. 'Blood, death, and liberty will be required at their hands,' cried John H. Hill, an escaped bondman.[2] Frederick Douglass's paper urged slave insurrections.[3]

What if Congress had passed and Washington signed a law for the capture of fugitive slaves? To observe such a law was itself a crime, an insult to the Deity. In a Thanksgiving Day sermon at Boston in 1850 Theodore Parker urged his congregation to disobey any law that was opposed to your conscience. 'We know that we ought not to keep a wicked law, and that it must not be kept when the law of God forbids.' [4] Suppose fugitive slave legislation was authorized and enjoined by the Constitution! Wendell Phillips cried. That very fact branded the Nation's fundamental law as 'a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.' [5] In 1837 the National Anti-Slavery Conven-

[1] *No Rights, No Duties:* Henry C. Wright, Abolition pamphlet, 28–9. The Abolitionists found in slave insurrections unanswerable arguments for immediate emancipation. See how well that policy had worked in South and Central American countries!

On the other hand, look at the results of the revolts where negroes were kept in slavery: New York, 1741, where, for such a revolt, thirteen blacks were burned alive, eighteen hung, and eighty transported; Richmond, 1800, where the black insurgent leader, Gabriel and his followers were hung; Charleston, 1822, where an insurrectionary plot was discovered and thirty-five executed, thirty-seven banished and one hundred and thirty-one imprisoned; Newbern, 1826, where forty slaves were driven into a swamp and all killed; the Nat Turner Insurrection with its bloody results, etc. Coffin, 15, 24–31.

[2] *Uncle Tom's Cabin Reviewed:* William Still, Abolition pamphlet, 192–3.

[3] 'Shall the millions for ever submit to robbery, to murder, to ignorance, and every unnamed evil which an irresponsible tyranny can devise, because the overthrow of that tyranny would be productive of horrors? We say not. The recoil, when it comes, will be in exact proportion to the wrongs inflicted; terrible as it will be, we accept and hope for it.' Frederick Douglass as quoted in foot-note to Chambers, 174. Douglass wrote this in 1856; but from the beginning of the abolition assault the same language was used by Abolitionists and negro lecturers in their employ.

[4] *Speeches, Addresses and Occasional Sermons:* Theodore Parker, II, 298–303.

[5] *The Constitution, a Pro-Slavery Compact* (ed. by Phillips), Abolition pamphlet, ix.

tion adopted resolutions that '*all those laws . . . admitting the right of slavery*, are, before God, NULL AND VOID.' [1]

And the Union! The precious Union! Too long had that formula been used to perpetuate and extend the infamy. Away with it! The American Anti-Slavery Society adopted 'No Union with slave-holders,' as its official motto.[2] 'Accursed be the American Union!' rang *Liberty Bell*, an abolition annual, in 1845. 'Accursed be it as the most . . . atrocious compromise ever made to gratify power and selfishness!' — accursed, 'as a libel on Democracy! accursed as stained with human blood!' [3] In every issue of the *Liberator*, Garrison printed conspicuously under the caption 'The American Union' half a column of quotations from the Bible against association with evil, and in large capitals: 'YOUR COVENANT WITH DEATH SHALL BE ANNULLED AND YOUR AGREEMENT WITH HELL SHALL NOT STAND.' Clay declared in the Senate in 1839, that to Abolitionists property, law, 'civil war, a dissolution of the Union' were nothing.[4]

And who, asked the Abolitionists, were these negro slaves? Not only were they, in the eye of God, spiritual kinsmen of their white oppressors; but, if given a chance, the negro was their equal physically, intellectually, and morally. 'The negro race

[1] Declaration American Anti-Slavery Convention, 1835, as quoted in *The South Vindicated from the Treason and Fanaticism of the Northern Abolitionists*, 185. Southern book, Phila., 1836.

[2] '*We will give the union for the abolition of slavery, if nothing else will gain it; but if we cannot gain it at all, then the South is welcome to a dissolution — the sooner the better.*' From abolition manifesto as quoted in Paulding, 300–1 (1836).

[3] *Liberty Bell*, 1845, Boston. John Pierpont wrote a long poem for *Liberty Bell* in 1842, of which typical lines are:

'Let the Liberty Bell ring out — ring out!
And let freemen reply, with thundering shout,
That the gory scourges and clanking chains,
That blast the beauty of Southern plains,
Shall be stamped in the dust;.
And that thrice-gorged Lust,
That gloats on his helpless bond-maid's bust,
Ere long shall see
That slave set free,
And joining in Liberty's Jubilee.
That Jubilee song!'

Anti-Slavery Poems: John Pierpont, 1843, 43.

[4] *Works*, VIII, 142.

is entitled to a place close by the side of the Saxon; . . . blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race,' find among your statesmen, diplomats, and soldiers the equal of Toussaint l'Ouverture, 'the inspired black of St. Domingo,' Wendell Phillips challenged, amid the cheers of his abolition audience.[1] In his book of Southern horrors, Parsons related the story told him by a slave, of another slave named Dread, whose head was as splendid as that of Webster and as full of intellect, and whose character was lofty and stainless; yet he was scourged for his obedience and murdered for his virtues.[2]

The most kindly and moderate Abolitionists laid every defect of the slaves, whether individual or general, to the debasing influence of bondage. Falsehood, lust, crime, inferiority, indifference to family ties and separations, all were caused by slavery. Even the mirth, jollity, and happiness of slaves existed only as a cover to despair.[3] Freedom, equal rights, equal treatment would produce in the negro character and intellect equal to those of white people. Such was the abolition philosophy and faith.

Speeches and private talks by abolition lecturers throughout the North were even more unrestrained than abolition literature, and not a country town, village, or hamlet escaped visits and appeals by these propagandists of freedom and equality. Southern character was reviled, and the fiery enthusiast of emancipation counted that day lost in which hatred of slavery and the South was not kindled by his terrible revelations and burning words.

The Southern people, at first, showed wrath and alarm. Slave insurrection and servile war, all the terrors that went with aroused and inflamed savage passions, would be the outcome and were the purpose of the 'insane' Abolitionists, they asserted. Repressive and oppressive slave laws were enacted

[1] *Speeches, Lectures and Addresses*, 468–94. This lecture was an argument to prove the natural equality of the negro with the white. 'I am about to compare and weigh races . . . to convince you that the negro blood, instead of standing at the bottom of the list, is entitled . . . to a place as near ours, as any other blood known in history.' *Ib.*, 468–9.

[2] Parsons, 224–31. This slave was the subject of a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe entitled *Dred: A Tale of the Dismal Swamp*, 1856. It was republished in 1866 as *Nina Gordon*.

[3] 'Having no future to live for, they make the present as merry as possible.' Mackay, II, 132.

throughout the South,[1] and Southern States appealed to Northern States to suppress abolition 'incendiarism.' As we have seen, several of these memorials and petitions came before Lincoln and were studied by him when he was a member of the Legislature of Illinois.[2]

But soon the writers, scholars, and public men of the South began to answer the abolition charges. Nor were they alone in their defence of Southern society and slavery. Northern writers of repute, Bishops and preachers of Northern churches, professors and presidents of Northern colleges, joined those of the South in reply; and many of these Northern men continued to protest, argue, and plead until after armies had taken the field.

Among the first and most eminent of these Northern defenders of the Southern people and of slavery was James Kirke Paulding of New York, who wrote, in 1836, an able statement of the Southern cause. Paulding flew to the support of the South, he said, because everything that had been published in the North had been 'on one side;' and because 'regard to the honour of our country; justice to a great body of as upright, honourable, and humane citizens as any nation can boast; respect to the laws of the land, and reverence for the constitution, seem to demand that the reverse of the picture should be seen.'[3]

In the imposing array of Southern pamphlets, books, and addresses that thus came to be published, the arguments and data are substantially the same. Lincoln read some of these Southern pronouncements, for Mrs. Lincoln was a subscriber to the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and many essays and papers by important Southern men appeared in that magazine.

Lincoln and Herndon took the *Charleston Mercury* and the

[1] Because of 'insubordination' among the slaves, 'traceable . . . to abolition movements . . . the legislative authority has found it expedient to infuse fresh vigor into the police, and laws which regulate the conduct of slaves.' Clay in Senate speech, Feb. 7, 1839. *Works*, VIII, 154.

[2] Vol. I, p. 247, *supra*. *William Lloyd Garrison*, I, 483, *et seq.*

[3] *Slavery in the United States:* James Kirke Paulding, 1836, 8. Paulding was one of the notable literary men of his time, prolific in fiction, satire, and poetry, and some of his novels were remarkably successful.

In 1837, a year after the publication of his defence of the South, Paulding became Secretary of the Navy in Van Buren's cabinet. He was one of the party that Lincoln helped entertain when Van Buren visited Illinois in 1840. See Vol. I, p. 332, *supra*.

Richmond Enquirer, two of the ablest and most extreme of Southern journals.[1] Herndon bought the *Sociology of the South* by George Fitzhugh, in which the arguments for bondage were presented. This book was infinitely impolitic, but as sincere as the outgivings of the Abolitionists. Fitzhugh advanced the idea that slavery was the best estate for labor and that labor itself should be owned by capital, a thesis from which Lincoln revolted in anger and disgust.[2]

Before his marriage Lincoln had been in intimate personal contact with slavery for several weeks while on his visit to Speed. During his seven years in the Legislature the whole question had been debated extensively two or three times. Lincoln's wife had been brought up among slaves and, to say the least, was not antagonistic to the institution; his father-in-law was a slaveholder and Mrs. Lincoln's share of her father's estate was partly from the proceeds of the sale of slaves. Lincoln was in Kentucky several times after his marriage and saw the condition, treatment, and life of the negro bondmen in that State.

He also witnessed the same things in Washington when he was in Congress, and, unless he went about the capital blindfolded, he saw gangs of slaves plodding in chains along the street. At the very time when Southern resentment of abolition words and deeds was reaching the danger point, Lincoln's closest associates were Stephens, Toombs, and other Southern members of the House; and heated debates on the subject sprang up in the midst of controversy over the Mexican War. In conversation on the streets, at boarding-houses and hotels, in the ante-rooms of Congress, wherever men and women met, discussion of the abolition assault and the Southern reply all but drowned the talk of politicians about conventions, nominations, patronage, and party advantage. The Southern warning, in the form of a statement of Southern grievances, came like the boom of can-

[1] Herndon, II, 363.

[2] Herndon to Weik. Oct. 28, 1885. Weik MSS.

George Fitzhugh was a successful lawyer of Virginia and a 'self-made' man, who owned no slaves; and, for that reason his book, published in 1854, is important, though it does not appear that his view of servitude, white or black, was held by any large number in the South.

Curiously enough, he was related by marriage to Gerrit Smith, one of the extreme Abolitionists, and the two men were personal friends.

non, just as Lincoln's term was drawing to a close. Back in Springfield the relatives of his wife and most of his friends held strongly to the Southern view of slavery, and public opinion in that town was decidedly of the same complexion as long as Lincoln lived there.

Thus, throughout the whole of this deadly conflict of opinion, Lincoln was informed of every phase of it. Few Northern men better understood Southern thought and feeling than did he, nor did any Northern man who was opposed to slavery on principle have a more comprehending sympathy with the Southern people in their racial situation. In short, the summary of the Southern case to which we are now to listen is indispensable to the interpretation of Lincoln's words and deeds — his speeches, his letters, his silences, his patience and mildness, his seeming hesitations, his immortal inaugural, his plans for reconstruction which so infuriated the extremists of his party.

Before his nomination for the Presidency, Lincoln was so inconspicuous that his opinions were not known in the South.

As to negro slavery, wrote its defenders, it formerly had been considered, in a vague and thoughtless fashion, to have been wrong, and most Southern men had looked forward, in an indefinite way, to its gradual extinction.[1] Thus had developed a slow amelioration of slave conditions.[2] But the abolition assault,

[1] 'Before the commencement of the abolition agitation here [South Carolina], it was the common sentiment that it was desirable to get rid of Slavery. Many thought it our duty to do so.' Hammond, 169.

'Had the abolitionists let us alone we should have been guilty, I verily believe, of political and social suicide, by emancipating the African race, a measure fatal to them, to ourselves, and to the best interests of this Confederacy [United States] and of the whole world.' Joseph Henry Lumpkin to Howell Cobb, Jan. 21, 1848. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 94–5. Lumpkin was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, 1845–67.

[2] 'Prior to the agitation of this subject of abolition, there was a progressive melioration in the condition of slaves throughout all the slave States.' Clay, VIII, 154 (1839).

'Negro slavery would be changed immediately to some form of peonage . . . if the slaves were sufficiently intelligent and provident to manage a farm. No one would have the labor and trouble of management, if his negroes would pay in hires and rents one-half of what free tenants pay in Europe. . . . But for the assaults of the abolitionists, much would have been done ere this to regulate and improve Southern slavery.' Fitzhugh, 86 (1854).

'Can any one be insensible of the increasing disposition of Virginia, Maryland, and some other states, to throw off their colored population?' Letter in the *Georgia Journal*, Dec. 4, 1821, in *Doc. Hist. Am. Indust. Socy.*, Phillips, II, 69.

with its attendant menace, had compelled Southern thinkers to examine the problem, they said, and this investigation had forced a sounder and a definitive view.[1]

Fact and reason, history and circumstance, biology and religion, they claimed, all demonstrated that negro slavery was morally right, socially essential, economically sound. Nay more! 'We see it now in its true light and regard it as the most safe and stable basis for free institutions in the world,' Calhoun stated in the Senate in 1837.[2] The Southerners declared that Northern people were ignorant of Southern conditions, and formed opinions from false statements and grotesque stories peddled about by sensation mongers and fanatics.

The South had inherited slavery, they said; it had existed as a part of Southern economic and social life for more than two hundred years. Their forbears had objected to it at first, but the British government had been deaf to their protests and, from motives of profit, had forced negro slaves upon the colonies.[3] Slavery was a 'bantling laid at our door by its mother, England.'[4] Thus, at the very beginning, the South had been inflicted with the 'thick-lipped African, fresh from the jungles of Congo and still reeking with the bloody stains of cannibalism.'[5] And who had brought most of the blacks? The ship-owners of New England.[6] Many a fortune of that section was due to the slave trade, and some of this wealth was now being used by Abolitionists.[7] When the Constitution was being formed,

[1] 'The violent assaults of those fiends have compelled us in self defence to investigate this momentous subject in all of its bearings, and the result has been a firm and settled conviction that duty to the slave as well as the master forbids that the relation should be disturbed.' Lumpkin to Cobb, Jan. 21, 1848, *supra.*

[2] Calhoun, III, 180. '*Servitude* is the condition of civilization.' 'Memoir on Slavery:' William Harper in *Pro-Slavery Argument,* 27. This author was the son of a Methodist missionary sent to Antigua by John Wesley. He graduated from the College of South Carolina at eighteen, was elected Chancellor of Missouri at twenty-nine and a member of the Constitutional Convention of that State at thirty, appointed Senator from South Carolina at thirty-five, elected Chancellor of that State at thirty-nine, and Justice of the Court of Appeals at forty.

[3] Paulding, 125–37; 'Plantation Records:' Ulrich B. Phillips, *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.,* 1911, I, 29.

[4] Paulding, 125. [5] Hundley, 10.

[6] 'Slavery in the Southern States:' *Southern Literary Messenger,* IX, 736–44 (1843).

[7] *Southern Institutes:* George S. Sawyer, 205–6; *Southern Literary Messenger,* XI, 513–28 (1845).

Northern shipping interests had secured the continuance of that traffic for twenty years.[1]

Did not every Northern State have negro slavery at the time of the Revolution? Of course they had done away with it — but when and why? At the point of time when, because of soil, climate, manufacturing, and other economic causes, slave labor had become unprofitable; and not a moment before.[2] Moreover most Northern slave-holders had thriftily taken their negro property South and sold it before the emancipation laws went into effect, Southern spokesmen asserted; the prudent Northern legislators had given their slave-owning constituents plenty of time for such foresighted transactions.[3]

Slavery had existed since before the dawn of history, said advocates of the Southern cause; negroes always had been slaves. The most ancient monuments and sculptures showed them only in that relation. Contact with Egyptian, Carthaginian, Saracen, and Roman civilizations had not changed the negro's status. During five thousand years he had produced no art, no literature, no science, nothing above the immediate animal wants of crudest savagery.[4] These were startling facts for which there must be a profound reason.

That cause was plain, indeed conspicuous. The negro was inferior; his quality was 'stamped upon him by the hand of God himself.' Look at the fundamental differences, physical, moral,

[1] 'They were actively, extensively and quite profitably engaged in the slave trade, and by their influence was the abolition of that traffic postponed for twenty years.' *Southern Literary Messenger*, XIII, 431, July, 1847.

The fact, however, was that the South gained the continuance of the slave trade in exchange for a navigation act desired by the North. 'The Southern States would not have entered into the Union of America, without the temporary permission of that [slave] trade.' Madison, in the Virginia Convention for ratifying the Constitution.

[2] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XI, 513–28 (1845); *Ten Letters on the Subject of Slavery:* Nathan L. Rice (1855), 13. Rice was a prominent Presbyterian clergyman, and, in 1854, was moderator of the General Assembly of that Church. Foreign anti-slavery writers also said that emancipation in the North was because of the unprofitableness of slavery. Mackay, II, 137; *The Americans*, etc.: Francis J. Grund, 369 (1837).

[3] Stephens, II, 102.

[4] Paulding, 41, 70–1, 229–47; Sawyer, 178–83; Hundley, 302–28. On the negro in Africa, all defenders of slavery dwelt upon his debasement and his inability to improve his condition, and some cited the accounts of travellers through that continent, such as Mungo Park, Lander, Livingstone, Richardson and Barth.

and intellectual, between him and the Caucasian.[1] On no one point did the South lay greater stress, and its opinion was that of Northern defenders of slavery. 'There exist physical incongruities which cannot be permanently reconciled,' declared Paulding in 1836,[2] an opinion which Lincoln often repeated as his own. Twenty-five years later Dr. William H. Holcombe of Virginia wrote: 'The negro is not a white man with a black skin, but of a different species, . . . the hopeless physical and mental inferior' of the white, and 'organically constituted to be an agricultural laborer in tropical climates — a strong animal machine.' [3]

In short, the advocates of slavery asserted that by nature the negro was peculiarly suited to bondage and was happier in this situation than other laborers were anywhere in the world. 'Every other form of government than that of slavery has signally failed in the case of the negro,' wrote Fitzhugh; 'he is an enemy to himself and an intolerable pest and nuisance to society, whenever among the whites he is free.' [4] Liberty meant nothing to him, Southern champions declared, except the luxury of idleness and a chance to revert to his former state.[5] Behold

[1] 'It is my purpose to demonstrate that, although the negro may deviate farther than the European from an artistic ideal, he does not cease to be human; that with this deviation *there is a manifest degradation, which approximates the negro, both corporally and mentally, to inferior animals.*' Hermann Burmeister, professor of zoölogy in the University of Halle. His essay, *The Black Man*, was republished by the *New York Evening Post* in 1853.

'Differences in the Intellectual Character of the Several . . . Races:' Harvey Lindsly, *Southern Literary Messenger*, v, 616–20 (1839); and see especially *The Laws of Race, as connected with Slavery:* [Sidney G. Fisher], Philadelphia, 1860, Pro-slavery pamphlet. Fisher's essay was the ablest argument made on scientific grounds against abolition. His thesis was that all human questions are, basically, those of race.

[2] Paulding, 65, 271, 279–80; Clay, VIII, 155.

[3] 'Characteristics and Capabilities of the Negro Race:' William H. Holcombe, M.D., in *Southern Literary Messenger*, XXXIII, 401–10 (1861).

Collateral Proof of Slavery . . . as founded on Organic Law, etc.: Marvin T. Wheat, 133–8 (quoting Agassiz and Nott), 144–62 (Caldwell and S. A. Cartwright), 191–9; *Industrial Resources of the Southern States:* J. D. B. DeBow, Professor of Political Economy, University of Louisiana, II, 315–30, quoting Dr. Cartwright of New Orleans.

Sawyer, 185–200; Paulding, 78–103; Fitzhugh, 81–95; *Speech before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church*, New York, 1856, Frederick A. Ross, 37 *et seq.*; Grund, 356. Indeed all supporters of slavery, without exception, put marked emphasis on negro inferiority.

[4] Fitzhugh, 282; Hammond, 133.

[5] Ingraham, II, 123. Fanny Kemble notes that their laziness seemed to her 'the ne-

the negro in Santo Domingo! Consider the plight of Jamaica where the slaves had been freed at the expense of the English people who had never seen them. 'Jamaica promises soon to become as pestiferous a sink of vice and corruption as the most libertine enthusiast can desire.' [1]

If 'three or four millions of African negro slaves had been dispersed over England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland,' they would not have been freed and permitted to remain in the United Kingdom, said Clay in the Senate in 1839. British solicitude for the blacks was of the long-range variety — several thousand miles distant and across the ocean.[2] 'An importation of 10,000 real negroes into this country [England] would very soon alter the national feelings,' wrote Mitchell as late as 1862.[3] Would British Abolitionists have clamored for emancipation at home as they had done for the manumission of slaves in Jamaica, if several million blacks had been 'mixed with the population of England'? Grund asked in 1837.[4]

Haiti and Jamaica showed the results of abolition on the negro. Under control, direction, and care of white masters, he became mild, useful, and even industrious, though in a sluggish fashion; [5] in such a relation he was light-hearted, faithful, devoted. See how loyal to their masters the slaves had been during both our wars with Great Britain! [6] Yet all this could be changed by working on the passions of the negro, inflaming his childish mind, arousing his latent savagery.[7] And just that was what the 'demented' Abolitionists were doing; they would let the negro revert to type and 'again wallow in the mire of barbarism and licentiousness.' [8]

cessary result of their primary wants being supplied, and all progress denied them.' 357.

[1] Paulding, 57–8; Fitzhugh, 89. For a description of the negro in Jamaica immediately after emancipation, see *A Twelve Months' Residence in the West Indies:* R. R. Madden, M.D., 95–110, Philadelphia, 1835; *DeBow's Review*, XII, 521 (1852).

The Southern charge that emancipation had failed in Jamaica was stoutly denied by anti-slavery men. See *An Address on . . . Emancipation in the West Indies:* William E. Channing (1842).

[2] Clay, VIII, 144–5.

[3] *Ten Years in the United States:* D. W. Mitchell, 250 (1862).

[4] Grund, 350.

[5] U. B. Phillips in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XXX, 741.

[6] Simms, 243–4.

[7] Dew, 463; Paulding, 281.

[8] 'Africa in America,' in *Southern Literary Messenger*, XXII, 1–14 (1856).

The charges that masters and overseers, generally and as a class, were wantonly cruel were sheer falsehoods, Southern writers asserted.[1] Only lazy, vicious, and turbulent slaves were flogged, only the criminal, chained and imprisoned; the brutalities of former times had been done away with.[2] Because of public disapproval and 'enlarged feelings of humanity,' the harsher slave statutes were ignored, 'except in times of high public excitement from the apprehension of insurrection,' the condition that had produced such laws.[3] Even in the Virginia debates of 1831–32, the most fervid advocate of emancipation had not charged that the slaves in that State were ill-treated or underfed.[4] Now and then slaves had to be whipped, but that was no more degrading than the castigation of white children and, generally, was done for the same reason and purpose.[5] Sometimes severer punishment had to be administered, Southern writers admitted, but it was for such offences as those for which whites in the North were imprisoned or hung.[6]

Of course there were cruel masters and overseers,[7] just as there were bad men everywhere; but 'the miscreant who is guilty of this [cruelty], . . . casts a shade upon the character of every individual of his fellow citizens,' declared Chancellor

[1] *Slavery in America:* Martineau, 29. Miss Martineau told of a Louisiana planter who was said to have declared that he found it profitable to work off his slaves every seven years — kill them by overwork. Fanny Kemble makes the same statement, as applying to the sugar plantations, 389. For its origin, see *American Negro Slavery:* Phillips, 382. Southern writers said that this was a plain lie.

[2] Hammond, 127–9; Simms, 216; Sawyer, 213.

[3] Paulding, 168–9; 203, quoting letters from a Judge in Virginia. Buckingham found that in Georgia in 1839, the laws against teaching slaves were not enforced and that some masters themselves taught their slaves. Buckingham, I, 168; and see Rice, 15.

[4] Dew, 459. [5] Hammond, 128–9; Harper, 34.

[6] Paulding, 170; Hammond, 128–30. 'If a man steals a pig in England, he is transported. . . . If one of our well fed negroes, merely for the sake of fresh meat, steals a pig, he gets perhaps forty stripes. If one of your cottagers breaks into another's house, he is hung for burglary. If a slave does the same here, a few lashes, or it may be, a few hours in the stocks, settles the matter.'

[7] Masters were 'responsible to God, . . . responsible to the world, . . . responsible to the community,' which, together with legislation, prevented cruelty and despotism. Hammond, 123–4.

'The good and the bad masters make the only difference; but then in such circumstances, this is immeasurable.' Bremer, 140.

'Nothing struck me more than the patience of slave owners . . . with their slaves.' *Society:* Martineau, II, 75.

Harper.[1] Southern champions insisted that usually slaves were well treated; interest alone compelled leniency and kindness, because profitable results from slave labor could be obtained in no other way.[2] The work of the plantation overseer was a profession, and a reputation for tact, kindness, patience, decision, and firmness — efficiency, in short — was vital to his success.[3] From impulse of humanity as well as from motives of prudence, the slaves were well-fed, well-clad, well-housed, and, when ill, cared for by physicians in the neighborhood, usually the same, indeed, who attended the planter's own family.[4] Dentists were employed to care for the teeth of plantation negroes.[5] The slave-owner or his wife often gave medicine to ailing negroes and tended them in sickness.[6] Miss Martineau recorded that a

[1] Harper, 65; *White, Red, Black;* Francis and Theresa Pulszky, II, 54–5. Francis Pulszky and his wife accompanied Thaddeus Kossuth on his tour of the United States in 1851–52. They were earnestly opposed to slavery, but their statements of things seen and heard in the United States are accurate and unprejudiced.

[2] 'The first law of slavery is that of kindness from the master to the slave.' *DeBow's Review,* XV, 257–77 (1853); Harper, 30; Pulszky, II, 105.

'If a man does not provide well for his slaves, it soon becomes known, he gets the name of a "nigger killer" and loses the respect of the community.' *Slave States:* Olmsted, 108 (1853).

[3] Sawyer, 213. Sawyer said that many prominent men began life as overseers, and he compared these plantation managers to the superintendents in Northern factories.

In *Slave States:* Olmsted distinguishes between the overseer, a white man required by law to be present among every body of slaves, and the slave 'drivers,' negroes, who made the slaves do their work well. 436–8. A driver's usual duty was to 'lay off tasks and use the whip.' A Virginian told Olmsted that overseers 'are the curse of this country, sir; the worst men in the community.' *Ib.,* 45.

[4] Simms, 215–6; Fitzhugh, 246; *Slave States:* Olmsted, 438–9; Phillips in *Am. Hist. Rev.,* XXX, 742–3, quoting affidavits of planters.

[5] Dental surgeon in *New York Day Book,* reprinted in *DeBow,* XXII, 631–3. This writer testified that he was paid $75 for a single visit, and that his services included cleansing, filling, putting in single teeth, partial sets, etc.

[6] Sawyer, 226–8; Ingraham, II, 122–4. On shamming illness see *Slave States:* Olmsted, 187–90; Ingraham, II, 122–3.

Much of the incomes of the physicians of Natchez in 1834 were from plantation practice. Large plantations had hospitals for slaves and some planters kept resident physicians on their estates. *Ib.,* II, 121.

Sir Charles Lyell testifies: 'We visited the hospital at Hopeton [plantation] which consists of three separate wards, all perfectly clean and well ventilated. One is for men, another for women, and a third for lying-in women. The latter are always allowed a month's rest after their confinement.' *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 264. Fanny Kemble gives a different account for the same neighborhood:

'So miserable a place for the purpose to which it is dedicated I could not have imagined on a property belonging to Christian owners. The floor (which was not boarded, but merely the damp hard earth itself,) was strewn with wretched women,

wealthy planter nursed his negroes stricken with cholera and bathed them with his own hands.[1]

Moreover care was taken that slaves should not be overworked [2] — this, too, was the result of self-interest as well as humanity, and public opinion also enforced moderation.[3] If the indolent and unruly were chastised, the industrious and provident were actually paid for extra work. 'You justly observe that if punishment is in one hand, reward should be in the other,' wrote the overseer of a big plantation to his employer.[4] The fact was, the defenders of slavery stated, the slaves of a

who, but for their moans of pain and uneasy restless motions, might very well have each been taken for a mere heap of filthy rags; the chimney refusing passage to the smoke from the pine wood fire, it puffed out in clouds through the room, where it circled and hung, only gradually oozing away through the windows, which were so far well adapted to their purpose that there was not a single whole pane of glass in them.' 273. Also, 35, 406.

[1] *Society:* Martineau, II, 74.

[2] Buckingham said in 1839: 'It must be confessed that in no part of the country or in the towns, do the slaves appear to be overworked, or to do, indeed, so much as a white labourer would be expected and indeed made to do, in the same situation of life.' Buckingham, II, 427.

Slaves were not employed in the unhealthy labor of ditching and draining. Not only did such employment interfere with plantation routine, but a slave was worth more than an Irishman or German and his death imposed loss on the planter. *American Negro Slavery:* Phillips, 301.

[3] Detailed instructions for overseers, prepared by enlightened planters for the management of their cotton and rice plantations, are in *Doc. Hist. Am. Indust. Socy.* (ed. Phillips), I, 112–30. See also Paulding, 185–214, for Virginia; *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 263–5, for Georgia; *Slave States:* Olmsted, 109–12, for Virginia.

These authorities give substantially the same data as to food, clothing, shelter, care, working hours and discipline of field-hands, throughout the South. Roughly, these were: plenty of food, two suits of clothing, two pairs of shoes annually, well-built cabins or brick houses, labor hours, dawn until dark, with from two to four hours' rest at noonday, etc. The slaves were given plots of ground on which they raised vegetables, chickens, etc., and these they ate or sold, etc.

Olmsted wrote that in South Carolina and Georgia the 'tasks' of the slaves were assigned with great exactitude according to the strength and age of the slave and active 'hands' finished their work in a few hours and went to their cabins. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 203–8. See also *ib.*, 434–6.

Fredrika Bremer visiting, in 1850, the plantation of Joel R. Poinsett in Georgetown, S.C., describes the copper vessels in the rice fields containing 'warm, steaming food, which smelled very good. Some of them were filled with brown beans, others with maize pancakes.' She took some and confessed she had 'seldom tasted better or more savory viands.' Bremer, 107.

[4] Phillips in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XXX, 742. Prof. Phillips gives examples of inducements offered by overseers and masters to get slaves to do extra work. Among these was a holiday after a crowded harvest and the payment of seventy-five cents each to five slaves for working on that day. *Ib.*, 741 *n.* And see Mackay, II, 128–9, on pay for work beyond allotted task.

good master were his warmest friends, rejoicing in his prosperity and success, grieving at his adversity and failure.[1] They were given as many holidays as white laborers in the North enjoyed, and the slaves had a better time at such seasons, particularly during Christmas week.

'As I write,' Sawyer declared, New Orleans was thronged with gay and happy negroes, buying, selling, and frolicking.[2] Sir Charles Lyell, writing of Georgia in 1845, testified that the slaves indulged in 'a kind of Saturnalia' throughout the whole of the Christmas season; [3] and Olmsted used the same word when picturing slave rejoicing at the same holiday period in Virginia in 1853.[4] Ingraham described the color and jollity of slave parties during Christmas week in Mississippi in 1834.[5] At Richmond, Olmsted was amazed at the number of negroes whom he saw on the streets of a Sunday dressed with 'foppish extravagance . . . in clothing of the most expensive materials and in the latest style of fashion.' On the 'fashionable streets' many more of these richly apparelled blacks were promenading than white people.

And their clothes! 'The finest French cloths, embroidered waistcoats, patent-leather shoes, resplendent brooches, silk hats, kid gloves, and *eau de mille fleurs*.' The 'colored ladies' were so well turned out 'after the latest Parisian mode,' that 'some would have produced a decided sensation in any European drawing-room.' But a white gentleman would gently brush them aside with his cane and white rowdies would shove the black men off the sidewalk, often with a blow; this treatment the negroes would resent loudly and with threats.[6]

Yet on any week day one might see comfortably dressed negroes leading to the slave market by a rope, negro boys and girls, handcuffed and thinly clad, even in coldest weather. Throughout the business week slave auctions were held at

[1] Ingraham said that slaves would throng to the burial of a master and weep bitterly. Ingraham, II, 82. Olmsted saw a slave greet with kisses a young master returning from college. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 135; Chambers, 116; *Society:* Martineau, II, 74.

[2] Sawyer, 217; Ingraham, on slaves in Natchez on Sunday (1834), II, 55.

[3] *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 263.

[4] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 101–2.

[5] Ingraham, II, 203–4.

[6] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 28–9.

several 'agencies' which everybody, including the slaves for the most part, took as a matter of course.[1]

Listen to the sound of banjo from the quarters at night or of song from the field in day-time. 'A merrier being does not exist on the face of the globe, than the negro slave of the United States,' Professor Dew asserted in 1832.[2] 'I believe our slaves are the happiest three millions of human beings on whom the sun shines,' wrote Governor Hammond in 1845; [3] and nine years earlier Paulding testified that 'of all the varieties of the human race or of human condition that have ever fallen under our observation, the African slave of the South best realizes the idea of happiness . . . for he is . . . the most light-hearted, sportive, dancing, laughing being in the world;' his exuberance of mirth 'could only come from the heart.' [4]

Comparatively few slaves wanted to be 'freed,' Southern writers declared, and Northern investigators, generally, confirmed this statement. The bondmen did not 'pine after freedom' more than the Laplander 'after the green hills and sunny skies of Italy,' Ingraham said.[5] Olmsted found that slaves often refused freedom when it was offered them, because they wished to remain where they would be cared for in old age; and not infrequently freed negroes, who went North, returned to their old homes because of the hard usage they encountered.[6]

Lyell wrote in 1842, that most fugitive slaves were vagabonds who would be imprisoned in free countries under normal conditions, and Ingraham asserted in 1834, that a good negro felt disgraced if a member of the slave family ran away, and slaves

[1] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 30–40.

[2] Dew, 459.

'Arriving often at a late hour at our quarters in the evening, we heard the negroes singing loudly and joyously in chorus after their days work was over.' *Travels:* Lyell, I, 144 (South Carolina, 1842).

[3] Hammond, 133.

[4] Paulding, 168, 176–7. 'The negroes . . . exhibit a light-heartedness which is surprising. . . . Of singing and dancing they are inordinately fond. . . . It is amusing to witness the zest with which on a summer-evening, after the work of the day is over, they will thus enjoy themselves in groups — some singing, some playing on instruments, jabbering, grinning, and frantically gesticulating at the same time, and others dancing with an earnestness which would lead one to the belief that they considered it the main business of life.' Mackay, II, 132–3.

[5] Ingraham, II, 201.

[6] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 130.

themselves were anxious to catch those who were trying to escape.[1] The Southern people were convinced that after 1831, most fugitive slaves were induced to run away by Abolitionists.[2]

Paulding described Southern slavery as 'patriarchal,' and insisted that it was the best mode of life for the negro.[3] The Southern system of bondage was, stated Professor DeBow in his magazine, 'nothing more than a rule of society;'[4] and Stephens defined slavery as 'that legal subordination of an Inferior race to a Superior one which was thought to be the best in the organization of society.'[5] Chevalier wrote to Thiers in 1835: 'Slavery, odious as it is, is one form of social order, and should be preserved where no better form can be substituted for it, as it must disappear when the inferior is ripe for a better state of things.'[6]

Hammond said that, of course, 'slaveholders are no more perfect than other men,' but he insisted that it was false and unjust to charge them with brutality.[7] Much of the cruelty to slaves, it was said, was inflicted by Northern men or foreigners who had acquired plantations in the South.[8] By far the most brutal of slave owners, however, were the free negroes who had made money and bought slaves for themselves.[9] For instance this was done at Norfolk, Virginia, where slaves sold for taxes were purchased by other negro bondmen.[10] For slaves were allowed to earn and keep money by raising and selling poultry and eggs and vegetables, or by working at extra jobs when the allotted task for the day was done; and a prudent, economical slave often made as much for himself as the Northern white

[1] *Travels:* Lyell, I, 150; Ingraham, II, 262–3.

[2] From 1810 to 1840, about 1500 slaves escaped annually, and the average was estimated to be the same in the following ten years. DeBow, *Industrial Resources,* III, 129.

[3] Paulding, 75–7.

[4] *DeBow's Review,* XXII, 75; Fisher, 15.

[5] Stephens, II, 24–5. *The Hireling and the Slave:* W. J. Grayson, Southern pamphlet, 1855, vii.

[6] Chevalier, 364.

[7] Hammond, 125.

[8] Dew, 456; Hammond, 127–8; Ingraham, II, 92–3; and *Travels:* Lyell, I, 147.

[9] 'It is an indisputable fact that when Negroes become owners of slaves they are generally cruel masters.' *Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States:* Charles C. Jones, 137. The number of such was, however, small.

[10] Sawyer, 215.

laborer could earn.[1] This ownership of property by slaves, while not a legal right, was sanctioned by custom.[2]

That the bondmen were well treated was proved, said the Southern advocates, by their fecundity, and supporters of slavery pointed triumphantly to the census.[3] How could the slave population increase so prodigiously if the slaves were starved, beaten, over-worked, ill-clad, poorly sheltered, they asked?[4] Not only were the slaves protected by interest, affection, and life-long contact, but by statutory law which shielded them as an inferior caste, to be sure, but such they were.[5] Let the assailants of the system and the traducers of the Southern people come South and see for themselves. The dreadful stories they printed and told were, asserted Southern spokesmen, most malicious falsehoods related by runaways, by gossips, or even invented outright by their purveyors; while most tales that had a basis of truth were of incidents long past.[6] Thousands of white husbands and fathers in the North and elsewhere were cruel, abusive, unfaithful; but should marriage and family be condemned because of these exceptions? Southern spokesmen

[1] 'With regard to the statement respecting the sums of money earned by industrious negroes, there is no doubt that it is perfectly correct.' Kemble, 408.

Sawyer, 216. Olmsted found that this was true in Virginia in 1853. The allotted daily 'task' was easily performed by slaves who wanted to work and who then, through bonuses, earned for themselves from five to twenty-five dollars a month; and a free negro earned $900 in a year, but spent it all, as the blacks generally did, although, now and then, a thrifty one saved his money and became very well off. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 126–8, 439. See further on the same subject, *ib.*, 203–8, 434–6; also Pulszky, II, 104 (Mississippi, 1852).

[2] Sawyer, 212.

[3] Hammond, 131. The growth of the slave population after the prohibition of slave trade in 1808 was: 1810, 1,191,364; 1820, 1,538,038; 1830, 2,009,043; 1840, 2,487,455; 1850, 3,204,318. *Census.*

[4] 'The increase of your negroes (and they increase like rabbits),' etc. John B. Lamar (manager of plantation) to Howell Cobb, May 16, 1847, Macon, Ga. *Plantation and Frontier:* Ulrich B. Phillips, I, 178–81.

'Their rapid increase attests their easy condition.' Chevalier, 155.

[5] 'Certainly the laws and enacted statutes on which this detestable system is built up are potent enough; the social prejudice that buttresses it is almost more potent still.' Kemble, 323.

[6] Hammond, 127. 'The research and ingenuity of the abolitionists, aided by the invention of runaway slaves — in which faculty, so far as improvizing falsehood goes, the African race is without a rival — have succeeded in shocking the world with a small number of pretended instances of our barbarity. . . . Yet of these, many are false, all highly colored, some occurring half a century, most of them many years ago.'

urged this point with vigor and persistence.[1] All human society was imperfect and so was that of the South; but it had its excellencies, too, and these outweighed its faults.[2]

Southern writers challenged comparison of slave treatment and conditions with those of free laborers in the North, in England, anywhere on earth; and they cited reports of legislative and parliamentary commissions on the actual experiences of the workingman and his family in New York, Massachusetts, and the United Kingdom.[3] Behold the shocking industrial situation in the manufacturing North! cried Southern advocates. Myriads of toilers, although called free men, were slaves in fact, and much worse off than the slaves in the South.[4] Squalor, poverty, want, unceasing and crushing toil were their lot even when employed, and during periods of unemployment they had to make shift as best they could.[5] In sickness and age they were helpless, miserable, desperate.

Thousands of white children in the North worked fourteen hours a day in mills and shops at an age when slave children of the South were 'enjoying all the sweets of luxurious idleness.' [6] Think of children in English factories forced to toil for seventeen hours a day! [7] Nor was the English farmer in better case — five or more children, wife, and aged parents existing in a hovel of a room or two, their food potatoes and brown bread, their clothes little better than rags; in case of bad crops, hunger and starvation, perhaps ejectment.

[1] Harper, 31. All slavery advocates made this point, especially Southern and pro-slavery preachers. There was more cruelty to wives and children in New York City in a year 'than in all the South from master to slave in the same time.' Ross, 53. Also Rice, 15.

[2] Hundley, 13–4.

[3] 'Slavery in the Southern States' in *Southern Literary Messenger*, IX, 736–44 (1843). Also 'Treatment of Slaves in the South-west.' *Ib.*, VII, 774–6. *Second Visit:* Lyell, II, 79, quoting William Thomson, the Scotch weaver: 'After witnessing negro slavery in mostly all the slaveholding states — having lived for weeks in cotton plantations . . . I can assert . . . that I have never witnessed one-fifth of the real suffering that I have seen in the manufacturing establishments in Great Britain.' Also see Buckingham, I, 215–5; Pulszky, II, 56–7 (1852).

[4] Harper, 52–6; *Southern Literary Messenger*, XVI, 193–205 (1850).

[5] Fitzhugh, 106–7; Paulding, 267–8.

[6] *Ib.*, 106–7 (1836).

[7] R. T. H. in *Southern Literary Messenger*, XI, 463 (1845); also Hammond, 135–9; and Harper, 30–1.

It was not so with negro slaves in the Southern States, insisted slavery advocates. They were fed and cared for from birth to the working period, and from the beginning of old age for the remainder of their lives, all at the owner's expense.[1] They were far happier than laborers in the North, better off than the peasantry of Europe.[2] Never for a moment were Southern slaves terrified by the spectre of a friendless future of want and starvation.[3] And during their years of productive labor, they could not be discharged, as were white laborers in 'free' countries when business was poor. No matter whether the season was good or bad, the market brisk or slow, the slave-holder had to support his negroes the same at all times. That was his interest as well as his duty.[4] Economically, it was the slave-holder's principal burden, for the expense made slave labor more costly than so-called free labor.[5]

If the Abolitionists magnified the moral over the economic phase of slavery, Southern writers treated these elements as of equal importance. That slave labor was more expensive than free labor, was, they said, compensated by the comparative insignificance of a pauper class in the South, the comparative

[1] Paulding, 213; Sawyer, 216; Fitzhugh, 85; Grund, 346–7. All pro-slavery writers made this statement prominent.

[2] *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 262; Chevalier reported that 'though intellectually and morally degraded,' the slaves were 'less severely tasked, better fed, and better taken care of, than most of the peasants of Europe.' Chevalier, 155 *n.*

And Olmsted wrote from Virginia in 1853: 'I think the slaves generally (no one denies that there are exceptions) have plenty to eat; probably are better fed than the proletarian class of any other part of the world.' *Slave States:* Olmsted, 110.

[3] Hundley, 66–7; Sawyer, 225.

[4] 'Treatment of Slaves in the South-west,' in *Southern Literary Messenger,* VII, 774–5.

[5] Hammond, 121–2; Harper, 26–7, 67; Fitzhugh, 279; *Second Visit:* Lyell, II, 72; Mackay, II, 148; Pulszky, II, 45.

In records of plantation management gathered by Professor Phillips appears startling evidence of the high cost of slave labor. For example, of one hundred and twenty slaves on one plantation in 1845, only forty-five did any work. *Doc. Hist. Am. Indust. Socy.,* I, 148. On the Belmead plantation, Va., there were one hundred and twenty-seven slaves of which 'about one-half probably comprised the working force.' *Ib.,* 208. 'Think of your having nearly ninety hands that work out, only one third paying any profit, while all the rest have to be fed, clothed, etc., just as expensively as if they were at work on good land.' John B. Lamar to Howell Cobb, May 16, 1847, *Ib.,* 178–81.

On an old plantation in Virginia, 1853, out of ninety-six slaves, only thirty-five were workers, the remainder being 'either too young or too old for hard work,' and the effective field force was but twenty-one; but this loss of productive labor was somewhat

freedom from crime.[1] Above all, the high labor costs of the slave-holder were more than returned by the economic and social stability of the South which, the Southerner insisted, the institution of slavery produced. Moreover, the larger part of his property was slave; it amounted to nearly one billion five hundred millions of dollars in 1850 and was rapidly mounting. To destroy that property would ruin him and ruin the South.

Without planters, slaves, and cotton, 'Mississippi would . . . revert to the aboriginal possessors,' Ingraham wrote in 1834; annihilate them and 'every southern state might be bought for a song;'[2] and Professor Dew asserted two years earlier: 'It is, in truth, the slave labor in Virginia which gives value to her soil and her habitations; take away this, and you pull down the Atlas that upholds the whole system; eject from the State the whole slave population, and . . . the Old Dominion will be a "waste howling wilderness."'[3]

Since, as they declared, slavery was morally right and economically essential, the champions of Southern institutions boldly affirmed that breeding of slaves was necessary. Professor Dew proudly asserted in 1832 that the rearing and sale of slaves was one of Virginia's 'greatest sources of profit.' In 1830 about six thousand slaves were sent from that State to Southern markets, he said, and it was from this source that the incomes of thousands of white families were drawn. The reason that negro bondmen in Virginia were inordinately prolific was because greater care was given them and matrimony was encouraged among them. So 'the Virginians can raise cheaper than they can buy;' and it had thus come about that 'Virginia is, in fact, a *negro* raising State for other States; she produces enough for her own supply, and six thousand for sale.'[4]

made up because the slave women were 'uncommonly good breeders.' *Slave States:* Olmsted, 57.

Of one hundred and eighty slaves on a plantation in Louisiana in 1852, one hundred were workers, fifty were children and twenty old. Pulszky, II, 102.

[1] Hammond, 121–2; Pulszky, II, 53. 'In hireling States there are thousands of idlers, trampers, poachers, smugglers, drunkards, and thieves . . . thousands who suffer from want of food and clothing.' Grayson, ix.

[2] Ingraham, II, 91. [3] Dew, 358.

[4] *Ib.*, 359, 369–70. Virginia 'enjoys the unenviable notoriety of being the chief slave-breeding State.' Mackay, II, 145.

About the same time Ingraham wrote that Virginia and Kentucky supplied most of the slaves which he saw arriving in Mississippi; he added that Missouri was beginning to compete in production, and that two hundred thousand dollars' worth would be bought there during 1834 for the Natchez market.[1] Twenty years later (1853) Olmsted estimated the number of slaves exported from the slave-breeding States to the cotton States, at twenty thousand annually; and he saw two freight cars loaded with such live stock.[2]

Was all this profitable increase of slave property to be lost and the remainder of that property besides? And to what end? Would the slaves be better cared for if 'freed' and cast upon their own resources? And what was to be done with the overplus of negro reproduction, if the sale of it was to be prohibited? Every student of economics, insisted Southern writers, knew that the negro slave was '*economically* . . . unfit for freedom,' just as he was '*morally*' unprepared for liberty — the tremendous decline in production in Haiti told the story.[3]

The slave market which so appalled Abolitionists did not in general terrify the negroes who were to be sold. On the contrary, wrote Ingraham of such a place in Mississippi in 1834 which he passed every week for more than a year: 'I have always seen the slaves either dancing to the sound of the violin, played by one of their number' or otherwise amusing themselves when not 'sleeping in the sun.' When a buyer appeared the slaves would strive to be purchased, since 'none but poor nigger

'Slaves are regularly bred in some States, as cattle for the southern market.' Reed and Matheson (1834), II, 249.

Buckingham saw wagons loaded with slaves going to Georgia and Alabama from Virginia, 'where they are extensively bred for this purpose;' and a gang of men, women and children, chained in pairs, driven South on foot. Buckingham, II, 43–4, 552–3.

Ingraham saw one such caravan upon its arrival in Mississippi. The slaves had walked all the way from Virginia; but, while tired, were in fine health, having been well-fed and cared for *en route*. Ingraham, II, 238–41.

[1] *Ib.*, 237–8. In 1852 Madame Pulszky found that in New Orleans most slaves in warehouses were from Virginia or South Carolina. Pulszky, II, 100.

[2] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 55–6. In most slave-breeding States as much attention was paid to the industry as to the breeding of horses and mules; and negro women were told to have children. 'I have known a great many negro girls to be sold off, because they did not have children.' He is quoting a letter of a slave-holder.

[3] Dew, 430–3.

stay for be sol' last;' and the one lucky enough to be chosen, was congratulated by the others.[1]

The abolition charge that the slaves were denied spiritual care, was disproved by their membership in churches, Southern writers claimed; nearly half a million slaves belonged to churches in 1860, mostly the Methodist and Baptist denominations; while the total membership of Christian churches in *all* 'heathen' countries in 1855 was only one hundred and eighty thousand.[2] Not only were slaves allowed and encouraged to attend white churches in the South, the galleries being given over to them exclusively, but they had churches of their own and slaves were preachers.[3] White ministers looked after the religious welfare and instruction of the slaves, and rich planters sometimes paid salaries for ministering to colored flocks.[4] Some plantations were provided with chapels for their exclusive use which the slaves called 'their prayer house.' [5] They frequented camp meetings, too, and there listened to preachers of their own race.[6]

Tens of thousands of Southern men and women firmly believed that God's hand was in the rescue of the negro from savagery to the superior state of bondage to a Christian people.[7] Comparison of the state of Southern slaves with that of their

[1] Ingraham, II, 202–3, 237. Fredrika Bremer gives an account of a slave auction in New Orleans, 267–72.

[2] Hundley, 297; Mackay, II, 131. And see Sawyer, 218–9, who said that slaves were admitted to membership in all evangelical churches; and that remote plantations were served by itinerant preachers.

[3] Harper, 37. Reed and Matheson found this to be the case in Lexington, Ky., in 1834, I, 217–21. Ingraham saw the same thing in Natchez where the slaves packed the galleries, and he said that two-thirds of the negroes whom he saw on the streets were on their way to church. Ingraham, II, 55–6 (1834).

The slave preacher was sometimes a 'driver' of his fellow slaves and always an important man among them. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 450–1. See Kemble, 67.

[4] Ingraham, II, 127–8. Ingraham saw a catechism which a planter had written for his slaves. Also see Hammond, 133. But, Mrs. Kemble says: 'Until the late abolition movement, the spiritual interests of the slaves were about as little regarded as their physical necessities.' Kemble, 67.

[5] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 449–50. The negroes asked one planter to have backs removed from the benches so that they could have '*room enough to pray,*' for at their devotions they danced, yelled, screamed, and flung themselves about madly. *Ib.*

[6] Reed and Matheson, I, 279.

[7] Ross, 36; Hundley, 299. The idea was widespread that through American slavery, by means of colonization, Africa was to be evangelized. Rice, 8–9. See resolutions of the Illinois Legislature, 1837. Vol. I, p. 192, *supra.*

African ancestors was the true standard of judgment.[1] 'I defy the world,' wrote Professor Dew in 1832, 'to produce a parallel to the rapid improvement of the slave in our continent since the period of his landing from the shores of his forefathers.' [2]

'During my time — I can remember how they were forty years ago — they have improved *two thousand percent!*' said a Virginia planter to Olmsted in 1853; and his testimony was confirmed by that of another planter.[3] Slavery had done much good in spite of its 'incidental evils,' a Northern Presbyterian minister declared, because it had been a 'wholesome training school for the negro from the lowest state of heathenism and barbarism to some degree of Christian civilization.' [4] Advocates of slavery constantly associated abolitionism with irreligion and lawlessness. The South was convinced that Garrison and his followers were 'infidels of the most impious type.' [5] It all came to this, cried Rev. Frederick A. Ross, during an impassioned speech before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in New York in 1856 — either liberty and order, or atheism and anarchy.[6]

No defenders of slavery were more vocal and militant than Southern ministers of the Gospel, and this fact led Abolitionists to belabor them lustily. Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian

[1] Simms, 272–3; Pulszky, II, 56.

[2] Dew in *Southern Literary Messenger*, II, 278–80 (1836). And see Fitzhugh, 84–5.

[3] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 106. Italics Olmsted's. 'You may find them now, on the isolated old plantations, . . . with no more intelligence than when they first came from Africa. But all about where the country is much settled their condition is vastly ameliorated. They are treated much better, they are fed better, and they have much greater educational privileges.'

[4] *Slavery and the Bible:* Rev. Philip Schaff, Chambersburg, Pa., 1861, 32, Pro-Slavery Pamphlet. This is the opinion of many scholars at the present time, says Professor Phillips of slavery. 'It incidentally trained a savage race to a certain degree of fitness for life in the Anglo-Saxon community.' *Doc. Hist. Am. Indust. Socy.*, I, 71 (1909).

'In this new home, whate'er the negro's fate —
More bless'd his life than in his native state!
No mummeries dupe, no Fetich charms affright,
Nor rites obscene diffuse their moral blight;
Idolatries, more hateful than the grave,
With human sacrifice, no more enslave;
No savage rule its hecatomb supplies
Of slaves for slaughter when a master dies:' etc.

Grayson, 31.

[5] Rice, 21.

[6] Ross, 52.

preachers in the South were quoted as saying that slavery was 'instituted by God himself;' that Christian ministers and Bishops should be slave-holders, as should all church officials; that slavery was a 'moral relation' under which the negroes and whites were 'the happiest people in the whole world;' that any 'goat' among Southern ministers who was 'tainted with the blood-hound principles of abolitionism' ought to be 'silenced and excommunicated;' that Abolitionists were 'banditti' and ought to be lynched; that the fate of Haman would be meted out to any of them who crossed the Potomac.[1]

Was Northern solicitude for the slaves inspired by affection for, or any humane interest in the negro, defenders of the South inquired? If so, why was it not shown to the free blacks in the North? Behold their wretched plight! segregated, existing in hovels, rejected by hotels, excluded from trains and boats, the doors of churches closed upon them![2] Northern white laborers refused to work with them.[3] The free negro in the free States was an 'alien, an outcast, a pariah,' wrote an Englishman intimately familiar with the United States.[4] The increased prejudice against negroes which impressed Lafayette so powerfully on his tour of the United States more than forty years after the Revolution was exclusively in the free States.[5] There was, in fact, an unquenchable hatred of them in the North.

In that section free negroes were proscribed for having even a drop of black blood in their veins.[6] Look at the anti-negro riots in New York and Philadelphia in 1834![7] The Abolitionists had made no provision for them in the North.[8] Think of the

[1] Birney, 13–34; *A Tract for the Times:* Rev. Henry T. Cheever, Abolition pamphlet, N.Y., 1859; *A Scriptural View of the Moral Relations of African Slavery:* David Ewart, Southern pamphlet, 1859.

[2] Chevalier, 361; Chambers, 129; Kemble, 6–8.

[3] Chambers, 131–3, 300; Mitchell, 159–61.

[4] Mitchell, 161; Fisher, 21–2.

[5] Simms, 212–3, quoting Miss Martineau; Chambers, 126–7.

[6] Mackay, II, 138–9.

[7] Chevalier, 156–7; McMaster, VI, 231. They were largely labor riots.

[8] *Southern Literary Messenger,* XI, 513–28.

'You who turn aside with a curse from the ragged starveling on your own doorsteps to clamor that the poor slave shall be freed, but afterwards refuse to sit with the freedman in the house of God, or in the theatres, or in public conveyances, or any where else. . . . The Southern Gentleman entertains more real love for his "human chattels," than all

number of them who were criminals! Witness the report of the Grand Jury of Essex County, Canada, which stated that nine-tenths of all crimes in that County were committed by these vagabonds who were 'indolent, shiftless, and dishonest, and unworthy of . . . sympathy.' [1] On the other hand 'nothing is so rarely heard of, as an atrocious crime committed by a slave,' declared Chancellor Harper — the very supervision of the bondmen prevented it.[2] The truth was, asserted Southern writers, that abolition freed the slave and then cursed him, while slavery bound the negro and blessed him — gave him, throughout life, home, care, protection, and advancement, slow but constant.[3] 'The Southerner is the negro's friend, his only friend,' Fitzhugh wrote; 'let no intermeddling abolitionist . . . dissolve this friendship.' [4]

Southern spokesmen conceded that sometimes slave families were separated, but insisted that this circumstance was grossly overstated. Public opinion as well as humanity and interest prevented it.[5] Where sales of slaves were necessary, even at

the hair-brained abolitionists the world ever saw. His love is not theoretical but practical. . . . Formerly he was theoretically an abolitionist, but he has long since got rid of such puerile sentimentality.' Hundley, 60–1.

[1] Hundley, 301; Paulding, 58–9, 67. Paulding said that, in 1836, there were 20,000 free negroes in New York each of whom with a freehold of one hundred dollars could vote; although every encouragement was given them, not more than one hundred ever cast a ballot.

[2] Harper, 38. Lyell said that on a plantation in Georgia which he visited in 1845, where there were five hundred slaves, no penitentiary offence had been committed for forty years; that during that period there had been only six cases of assault and battery; and that the worst punishment had been for theft by one slave from another. *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 265–6.

Free blacks in the South, on the contrary, were the most vicious and corrupting element in Southern life. During forty-five years in Virginia, the ratio of convicts was one in about three hundred and twenty-eight of the whole population and one in sixty-seven black or mulatto. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 125, quoting Howison.

[3] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XI, 528 (1845); Jones, 150–1.

[4] Fitzhugh, 95.

[5] 'Some painful instances may, perhaps, occur. Very few that can be prevented. It is, and always has been, an object of prime consideration with our slaveholders, to keep families together.' Hammond, 132.

'From what we heard stated in America,' many planters sold their slaves only when forced to do so by 'the pressure of extreme necessity.' Chambers, 116.

'Such divisions [of slave families] are, however, carefully guarded against and prevented, as far as possible, by owners, on the score of interest, as well as of religion and humanity.' Jones, 133.

Lyell speaks of the compulsory separation of families as one of the greatest evils of the

sheriffs' sales, effort was made to transfer families together — when the slaves desired it. Southern writers urged that family ties were not as strong among the negroes as among whites.[1] Usually they promptly forgot all about their domestic associations, and were singing, playing the banjo and amusing themselves, even when on their way to far distant plantations in the nether South. It was an instance of this kind, the sight of which so astonished and puzzled Lincoln when going down the Ohio with Speed on a steamboat in 1841.

The charge of miscegenation was frankly admitted and the evil bitterly denounced by Southern writers. Yet they claimed that even this condition was 'atrociously exaggerated,' although a single instance of it was wicked and disgraceful.[2] They mentioned certain facts which in their opinion partly explained it — propinquity, temperament of youth, qualities of the African.[3] The negro 'strongly inclined to polygamy,' [4] they pointed out, and scientists laid emphasis on the sensuality of the females of that race.[5]

Abolitionist accusations were irreconcilable. 'One of your heavy charges against us has been, that we regard and treat these people as brutes; you now charge us with habitually taking them to our bosoms.' [6] Nevertheless, natural repugnance, statutory law, and public opinion discouraged or condemned

system, but gave two examples of refusal to sell when such separation would result. *Second Visit*, I, 209–10.

In 1839 Buckingham wrote that separation of families was common. Buckingham, I, 249.

[1] Hammond, 132–3; Harper, 56–7; *Slave States:* Olmsted, 555-7; Sawyer, 219–22. All dwell upon the want of sensibility in the slaves of family relations. Sawyer declared that while marriage was customary among the slaves, they were, in general, indifferent to it; and that the hardest task of the master was to regulate sexual relations. Slave marriages were 'without legal recognition.' *American Negro Slavery:* Phillips, 500.

[2] Simms, 229–30; Hammond, 119, and all defenders of slavery.

[3] Harper, 40–6; *Retrospect:* Martineau, I, 267–8.

[4] Polygamy is practiced both secretly and openly. Holcombe, XXXIII, 405 (1861).

[5] Sawyer, 221. 'The female slave is proud of her connection with a white man,' etc., *Second Visit:* Lyell, I, 271–3.

Olmsted related that slave girls 'greatly detested' Northern families to whom they were hired as domestics, because their employers insisted on chastity and begged to be taken away from such rigid service; but Olmsted laid this fault to the corrupting effect of slavery. *Slave States:* Olmsted, 132–3.

[6] Hammond, 119.

miscegenation. So did practical plantation management; the owner or overseer realized that it lost the confidence of men slaves and gained the contempt of women slaves.[1] Still it was conceded by Southern writers that such illicit relations too often did exist, and no Abolitionist scourged the white offender so mercilessly as they did.[2]

The South gloried in the purity of Southern women — they were 'the model women of the age,' proudly declared a Southern writer, and compared their modesty and quiet manners with the bustling 'fashionables' of the North.[3] The abolition slanders about Southern women were ignored by Southern men, who yet remembered those defamations with silent but undying wrath and hatred. Apologists of the South handled the whole noisome subject with repugnance and regret.[4]

No restraint controlled their pens, however, when denying the charge that slavery was a violation of the spirit of American institutions or a sin in itself. The preamble to the Declaration of Independence was not meant to apply to negro slaves, they declared; if it was, Jefferson and other slave-holders who signed that immortal document would have manumitted their black bondmen.[5] Hamilton had said the same thing long before Jefferson, but he had reference to whites only, 'political men.'[6] The assertion that all men are created equal and endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty. and the pursuit of happiness, if considered as the statement of a principle founded on fact, was obviously untrue. On that point the Declaration meant only that Hancock, Adams, Jefferson, and other signers had told King George, Lord North and members of the British Parliament that they were 'as good men as you, any day' and 'your equals' in every respect. 'The Democracy which they asserted not only recognized, but insisted upon inequalities;'

[1] Sawyer, 220–1. [2] *Ib.* [3] Hundley, 72.

[4] 'But I have done with this disgusting topic.' Hammond, 120.

[5] *The Right of American Slavery:* T. W. Hoit, 23, Southern pamphlet, St. Louis, 1860, two editions of which numbered 500,000 copies.

[6] Sawyer, 208–9; Paulding, 44. 'Neither by birth, by inheritance, by public services nor by any natural or acquired claim, have the slaves of the United States any right to the privileges of free citizens of the United States, by whom alone liberty was achieved, and who alone are entitled to its blessings, on the ground of principles recognised by all civilized nations.' *Ib.*, 273. Also see Fisher, 13.

so the framers of our Constitution left slavery 'precisely as they found it.' [1]

The theory of the Declaration was imported from Rousseau and other philosophers of upheaval, of whom Jefferson had become a disciple,[2] said Southern defenders. Rank infidelity, 'blind and foolish,' to which he also subscribed, prevailed; and it was under the influence of that aberration that he wrote the 'exuberantly false and arborescently fallacious' preamble. 'Institutions founded on such generalities and abstractions . . . are like a splendid edifice built upon kegs of gunpowder.' [3]

Equality of birth never had happened, never would or could happen. Physically, mentally, and in every way, no two human beings were exactly alike when they came into the world; nor could they be made equals in fortune, achievement, or career by any possible legislation.[4]

Nor was 'equality' a good thing, since it was diversity that made the world attractive and beautiful.[5] No 'inalienable rights' existed . . . the volunteer soldier and sailor, for instance, deliberately parted from their independence, and those conscripted had most of their 'inalienable rights' taken from them forcibly.[6] Indeed, all civil government was but the restraint by law, enforced through pains and penalties, of the evil propensities of man.[7] 'None but brutes and savages desire entire liberty. The only free people in the world are the Digger Indians.' [8]

Even more absurd was the 'fanatical' cry that American slavery was essentially sinful, said advocates of slavery. It had actually ennobled the heathenish African. Was that sinful? [9] How outrageous, how patently false the charge that slave-holders were thieves, man-stealers, monsters of cruelty and lust. Washington, Jefferson, Mason, Madison, Monroe, Jackson and Marshall were slave-holders. Were they criminals? Jonathan

[1] Simms, 252, 258. [2] Simms, 250–1.

[3] Fitzhugh, 182, 189, quoting Henry Lee, the critic of Jefferson.

[4] Harper, 6–7; Fitzhugh, 177–8, 180.

[5] Simms, 253–6. Simms quoted Shakespeare and Pope in support of his thesis of inequality. 255–6.

[6] Fitzhugh, 85, 107, 179–81. [7] *Ib.*, 170–1, 180; Simms, 259–60.

[8] Fitzhugh, 283. [9] Ross, 29.

Edwards, the foremost theologian of his time, was a slaveholder.[1] Was he a sinner? George Whitefield, who, next to Wesley, was the most eminent Methodist of his day, owned slaves.[2] Was he a wicked man?

Slavery prevailed everywhere when Jesus came — there were sixty million slaves in the Roman Empire when the Savior began to teach — yet Christ and the Apostles did not condemn it.[3] How, then, could it be a sin? Peter counselled submission. Paul sent the fugitive slave, Onesimus, back to his master, Philemon. Why did not these early proclaimers of the Word advise slaves to run away?[4] St. John prophesied that at the end of the world there would be 'BOTH FREE AND BOND.'[5] Defenders of slavery vehemently insisted that the Bible throughout, approved the relation of master and slave.[6] '*We accept the Bible terms as the definition of our Slavery, and its precepts as the guide of our conduct,*' wrote Governor Hammond in 1845, while the Abolitionists '*deny the Bible, and set up in its place a law of their own making.*'[7] Even if slavery were an evil it was their own; they were responsible for it. and it was not the business of outsiders to interfere.[8]

About the sin of slavery, as determined by Biblical standards, the verbal controversy raged more fiercely than at any other point except, perhaps, that of miscegenation, and the Abolitionists were hard pressed to meet scriptural quotations. Abolition preachers finally took the ground that the many passages of the Old and New Testaments in which slavery was recognized and approved had been translated incorrectly.[9] The defenders of

[1] Rice, 12.

[2] *History of the United States from the Compromise of* 1850: James Ford Rhodes, I, 5.

[3] Paulding, 23–7; 291; Sawyer, 104–10; Hammond, 106; Dew, 451–3. All pro-slavery writers made copious Biblical citations.

[4] Sawyer, 104–18. The angel of the Lord told the runaway slave, Hagar, to go back to her mistress: 'Poor Hagar! Wert thou deluded by some vendor of quack medicines and wooden nutmegs? How many Hagars, starving in the wilderness, may now be found in the North?' Fitzhugh, 297.

[5] Hundley, 323.

[6] *Southern Literary Messenger,* XI, 513–28 (1845); XVII, 193–205 (1850).

[7] Hammond, 108–9. Italics Hammond's. [8] Clay, VIII, 150.

[9] *An Examination of the Mosaic Law of Servitude:* William Jay, Abolition pamphlet, N.Y., 1854. See also *A Debate on Slavery,* between Rev. J. Blanchard, Sixth Presby-

slavery hooted in derision. For a long time most Northern preachers avoided the subject or openly and vigorously championed the Southern view. Dr. Moses Stuart, Professor of Theology in Andover,[1] Rev. Wilbur Fisk, D.D., President of Wesleyan University, Connecticut, Rev. Nathan Lord, D.D., President of Dartmouth College, New Hampshire,[2] the Right Rev. John Henry Hopkins, Episcopal Bishop of Vermont, and many ministers and divines of lesser station, wrote brochures and preached sermons to show the Biblical and Christian authority for slavery. Abolition ministers produced counter pamphlets and denounced in terms of fury their fellow clergymen who defended the 'Curse.'

Excitement ran ever higher, feeling grew ever more intense. Debates were held between prominent clergymen of high reputations. At conference after conference, assembly after assembly, synod after synod, the denominations refused to condemn slavery, and sometimes rebuked those who insisted on emancipation.[3]

But gradually anti-slavery sentiment gained the upper hand; and in 1844 the Methodist Church split on the subject, the Southern ministers withdrawing and organizing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which endures to this day.[4] Then

terian Church, Cincinnati, affirmative, and N. L. Rice, Central Presbyterian Church, negative, 103, 108, 135, 138.

[1] *Conscience and the Constitution:* Dr. Moses Stuart, 1850.

[2] *A Letter of Inquiry to Ministers of the Gospel of All Denominations on Slavery:* Rev. Nathan Lord, D.D., Anti-abolition pamphlet, 1854. Also *A Northern Presbyter's Second Letter,* etc. by same, 1855.

[3] Brief and prejudiced accounts of the failure of churches to denounce slavery and of pro-slavery statements by ministers of all denominations were printed by the Abolitionists and widely circulated. *The Church as it is, or the Forlorn Hope of Slavery:* Parker Pillsbury, Boston, 1847, Abolition pamphlet. This was almost identical with the pamphlet by James G. Birney entitled *American Churches, the Bulwarks of American Slavery.*

Also see *Relations of Anti-Slavery to Religion:* Charles K. Whipple, Anti-Slavery Tract No. 19 (about 1840), Abolition pamphlet. Also *Slavery and Anti-Slavery:* William Goodell, N. Y., 1855, Abolition book.

[4] For ten years before actual separation the anti-slavery feeling in the Methodist Episcopal Church had led to secession on the part of many members in the North, to acrid debates and persecution among the ministry, and to the growth of a feeling quite as aggressive as that of the Abolitionists. The formation of Wesleyan Societies in which slave holding was prohibited, not only gave an organization to secession from the church, but encouraged an anti-slavery spirit among the loyal Methodists of the North in the hope of checking the spread of the seceding movement. The same influence aroused

came a like division of the Baptist Church, and the association of Presbyterian Churches in the two sections was also practically suspended. The Episcopal Church avoided schism, as did the Catholic Church.

Though Southern writers and spokesmen said and wrote much on the Biblical and sociological aspects of slavery, they constantly reminded the assailants of that institution of the material loss which emancipation would cost them, and of the unhappy results to the North of a negro exodus to that section. Cotton, sugar, and rice could not be raised without negro slave labor — the Caucasian could not stand the heat, the negro revelled in it. Europe and the North must have cotton. Emancipation meant idleness and starvation for multitudes of workingmen in the North and in England.[1] Why did not opponents of slavery show their sincerity by refusing to use the staples it produced? The South was by far the best customer of the North, and every item was bought largely by the proceeds of slave labor. Did Northern manufacturers or merchants refuse to sell on that account? Did they not make and vend the very articles of slave discipline and punishment — whip, handcuff, shackle, chain? Did not Abolitionists themselves buy and use cotton goods, sugar, rice, and other output of the Wickedness? [2]

Suppose the three or four million slaves were emancipated — what would happen then? Already they outnumbered the whites in two or three States, and were increasing rapidly. Let

alarm in the Methodists of the South who saw their position as slave-holders threatened within the church on the grounds urged by the extreme Abolitionists. Such was the situation when the Conference of 1844 met in May, in New York City, and the slavery question came up at once and the first vote proved that the opposers of slavery largely outnumbered its supporters. Every effort to reconcile the two parties failed and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came into being. 'This was not schism but division for greater mutual prosperity,' said Dr. Charles Elliott, who favored the separation. The differences in the church reflected the political differences in the Nation and were believed by many to have shaken the pillars of the Union. *History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South:* 1845; *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War:* William Warren Sweet, 1912; *The Schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church,* 1844; John Nelson Norwood, 1923.

The immediate circumstance which brought to a head the conflict in the Methodist Church was a resolution offered in the General Conference of 1844, suspending Bishop James O. Andrew from his episcopal duties, because he had, through marriage, become connected with slave-holding.

[1] Harper, 86–8; Fisher, 61–3. [2] Ross, 16–7.

the Northern people look at the free negroes among them, think of them multiplied hundreds of times, and the plight of Southern white men and women, surrounded by uncontrolled black hordes, would be realized to some extent. It would mean a fight between African and Caucasian, and a fight to the death. 'The war of the races is an event of the certain future,' predicted the English journalist, Mackay, in 1846–47.[1] If the negroes should win, 'the fabric of civilization and liberty, which consumed ages in its construction, would be demolished . . . by the relentless fury of ignorant barbarians. A new Africa would spring up in the place of free and enlightened states.' [2]

If the slaves were not only 'freed' but given the ballot, the situation would be far worse. Without experience of or instinct for self-government, the emancipated and enfranchised negro would be 'a libertine in morals and an anarchist in politics.' [3] Led by disreputable men, this tremendous negro vote would unite with Northern enemies of the South and control the National Government.[4] In Southern States, where they were in the majority, the blacks would dominate local governments. Could white men and women be expected to submit to that? Never! unless forced to do so at the point of bayonets.

And just that was what the whole project would come to in the end, declared both Southern and Northern antagonists of emancipation. '*The negro question lies far deeper than the slavery question*,' wrote a Pennsylvania clergyman as late as 1861.[5] The South would resist, she would be forced to resist, warned Paulding in 1836. 'It may be sport to us, but it is death to them.' [6] In 1839, Clay foresaw disunion and war as the certain outcome of the abolition movement. The 'fanatics' would finally succeed in uniting the North against the South and 'union on the one side will beget union on the other. . . . The collision of opinion will be quickly followed by the clash of arms.' [7] Under any

[1] Mackay, II, 139–40. [2] Paulding, 82–3. [3] *Ib.*, 89–90.

[4] Pulszky, II, 58. 'To give them political rights, would be a most dangerous thing; for being untrained to public life, they would become the tools of demagogues.'

[5] Schaff, 31. Italics Schaff's. 'What is called the slavery question . . . ought to be called the negro question.' Fisher, 12.

[6] Paulding, 53.

[7] Clay, VIII, 157. Clay pictured 'desolated fields, conflagrated cities, murdered in-

circumstances, immediate emancipation was impossible. 'The growth of *ages* may require *ages* to remove,' wrote Professor Dew in 1832.[1]

But, said Southern writers, there was no such thing as reasoning with Abolitionists, for they were blind to facts, deaf to argument;[2] they advocated lawlessness if, to them, the law was wrong; their code of conduct was that the end justified the means. They constituted an 'eccentric faction, shedding from its humid hair pestilence upon the nations.'[3] It was the same old story — the 'libertines of philanthropy' had always caused most human ills by trying to cure imaginary evils.[4] As to those in the North who, because they believed the falsehoods told by abolition agitators, opposed the extension of slave territory, but did not think it should be disturbed in the slave States — this class had simply been deceived; and they were used by Northern politicians who cared nothing whatever about slavery, except to employ the subject as a pawn in their party game.[5] The whole anti-slavery movement was aimed at the South as much as against slavery, the Southern people concluded.[6]

All that the South asked, its spokesmen said, was to be let alone — let alone in its social and economic life, let alone in the exercise of its rights. What rights? Those established and guaranteed by the Constitution; the right of each State to manage its own affairs in its own way, the right to recover fugitive slaves as the Nation's fundamental law ordained, the right to prevent Northern 'incendiaries' from stirring up insurrection

habitants;' and, no matter which side won, it would be a 'suicidal conquest . . . of brothers over brothers, . . . the descendants of common ancestors.'

[1] Dew, 287–8, 490. Italics Dew's.

'The Saxon, residing in the South with the negro, has chosen this system for his government. He claims the right . . . by the prerogative of race, by the decree of nature, which made him the superior of the negro, in force of mind and character, and therefore his ruler. He will not relinquish his claim. He cannot if he would. His right to it runs in his veins, beats in his breast. . . . He will resist whilst he can, any power that shall attempt to interfere with that right.' Fisher, 15–6.

[2] Paulding, 63.

[3] Henry L. Benning to Howell Cobb, Feb. 23, 1848. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 99. Benning was a lawyer of Columbus, Ga., and became a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army.

[4] Paulding, 107. [5] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XIII, 434 (July, 1847).

[6] *Ib.*, XX, 60–1 (Jan., 1854).

and lighting the fires of servile war through the South, the right to equal enjoyment of territories acquired by the common effort and sacrifice of South and North alike.

Most Northern people denied some of these 'rights'; Abolitionists denied all of them, and the whole North complained that the South had ruled the Nation. Even if that were true, had any injustice been done the North? Had the South 'invaded' the North or tried to make that part of the country like the South?[1] If Southern men had predominated in National Councils, it was because there was more public ambition in that section. Burke, in his speech in Parliament on his resolutions for conciliation with the Colonies, had declared that the spirit of liberty was 'more high and haughty' in the South than elsewhere in the Colonies, and that this was so wherever the Caucasian held the African in bondage.[2]

Southern jurists and publicists asserted that the Northern complaint that three-fifths of the slaves were counted in determining the number of representatives in Congress, showed crass ignorance of the reason for that Constitutional provision. That proposal came from James Wilson of Pennsylvania, they said, whom Washington placed on the Supreme Bench. The quota was originally based on the economic ground that negro labor was inferior to white labor.[3] Hamilton had explained that point in the New York Convention on the Constitution. The provision was 'entirely just,' for representation '*should be compounded of persons and property;*' and since much of the population and property of the South consisted of slaves, the inclusion of three-

[1] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XXXII, 308–11 (April, 1861). *DeBow's Review*, VIII, 92 (1850), gave a summary of the number of years that Northern and Southern men had held the principal offices in the National Government from 1790 to 1850:

President	North	12	years;	South	48	years.
Vice-Pres.	"	40	" ;	"	20	"
Chief Justice	"	11	" ;	"	48	"
Sec. State	"	20	" ;	"	40	"
Sec. Treas.	"	46	" ;	"	14	"
Sec. War	"	34	" ;	"	25	"
Sec. Navy	"	40	" ;	"	19	"
P.-M. General	"	35	" ;	"	25	"
Att'y Gen.	"	20	" ;	"	39	"
Speaker House	"	23	" ;	"	37	"

[2] R. T. H., in *Southern Literary Messenger*, XI, 455 (1845).

[3] Stephens, II, 95–102.

fifths of them in arranging the scale of representation was 'one result of the spirit of accommodation which governed the [Constitutional] Convention; and without this indulgence no Union could possibly have been formed.' [1]

More than forty years after Hamilton wrote that obvious truth, Madison had urged that the same rule for representation should be adopted by Virginia because personal and property rights 'cannot well be separated.' [2] Madison, who more than any one man gave interpretation to the national compact, had thus spoken in the fulness of age and wisdom, when personal ambition could no longer influence him. Instead of being a concession to the South by the North, it was the other way around, insisted Southern lawyers; if the South had no slaves, she would have an equal number of free laborers and therefore a larger delegation in Congress.

Next to their terror of black supremacy, the Southern people feared national consolidation. To many, indeed, this danger was paramount; and all thought that centralization of power would be fatal to the rights of individuals as well as of the States. Either disunion or consolidation would destroy the Republic, but of these two evils, consolidation was the worse. Even if a centralized government were still called a democracy, 'it would become the most corrupt, the most demoralizing, the most intolerably oppressive government which the annals of history could furnish.' The outcome would be that 'the greedy many' would rob 'the proscribed few;' [3] and there would be no safeguard, since constitutional guarantees would be extinguished by the very forces that brought about consolidation.[4]

If liberty was to be preserved, only a federated government could successfully function over a country as vast as the United States — a centralized national establishment could not work and still retain freedom. Division of power was 'the very essence of liberty,' consolidation necessarily 'despotic,' whether the power be wielded by a single autocrat or by 'an absolute and unchecked majority,' Calhoun had said in the Senate in

[1] R. T. H., in *Southern Literary Messenger*, XI, 453–4 (1845). [2] *Ib.*, 454.

[3] Dew, in *Southern Literary Messenger*, II, 280–1 (1832).

[4] Calhoun, *Works*, II, 384–5.

1834.[1] Yet that was the purpose and surely would be the outcome of the crusade by Northern antagonists of slavery and assailants of the South. Even after the Civil War Stephens stated what was still the Southern belief, that 'the Abolition or Anti-Slavery Party . . . in truth, was the party of Centralism and Consolidation.' [2]

So Southern spokesmen contended, as George Mason and Patrick Henry had done in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1788, that a national government with ever-increasing powers would finally usurp the rights of States, and extinguish personal liberties won by centuries of struggle and sacrifice.[3] Professor Dew predicted in 1836, that consolidation would end in the tyrannical dominance by a national majority, made up of the envious, the fanatical, the ignorant; and that the provident and prosperous would become the victims of these hordes of rapacity and intolerance. A sullen and ignorant proletariat pandered to by demagogues would, by means of 'legislative plunder,' work havoc with property, enterprise, and thrift. Not only would that American freedom perish for which patriots of the Revolution fought, but American character would be debased, tame submission would take the place of manly independence and nobody would assert or even give voice to his rights or opinions. The individual would be suppressed by the hosts of prejudice and ignorance led by ambitious hypocrites. The time would come when America would have no more Washingtons or Jeffersons, because consolidation meant the death of genius — the multitude did not tolerate wisdom or greatness. Therefore, he counselled, 'let us foster and cherish and love our State institutions as the palladium of our liberties and the nursery of our real greatness.' [4]

[1] Calhoun, *Works*, II, 386–7.

[2] Stephens, II, 28. As late as 1868, Stephens was still convinced that the anti-slavery movement brought into action principles 'which must inevitably, if carried out, ultimately lead to the absorption of all power in the Central Government and end sooner or later in Absolutism or Despotism.' *Ib.*, 33.

Chevalier wrote Thiers in 1834 that 'the principle of separation is engaged in a deadly conflict with the spirit of centralization or consolidation.' Chevalier, 97.

[3] Calhoun, 'Discourse on the Constitutional Government of the United States:' *Works*, I, 380–1.

[4] Dew, in *Southern Literary Messenger*, II, 281–2 (1836).

Such were the sombre forecasts made by Southern thinkers; and the vast majority of the people of the South believed, with the ardor of religious conviction, that those prophecies would come true if the rights and sovereignty of the States were not maintained. Moreover, that was the best method of preserving any Union worth having, a voluntary Union of separate communities called States, a Union held together by mutual interests, racial ties, bonds of affection, and glorious memories — not an enforced Union, sustained by physical might. To tens of thousands of Southern men, this view was so dear that they were willing to die for it; and it was to uphold that idea rather than slavery, that such men took the field.[1] To them loyalty to their State came before fealty to the Federal establishment, and in case of conflict their duty was to their State.[2]

Each of the old States had an individuality and was infinitely proud of its history. 'The Virginian is a Virginian everywhere,' proudly declared Professor Beverly Tucker of William and Mary College in 1838.[3] Yale, Harvard, Princeton, even West Point, 'did not seem to nationalize the Southerner.'[4] The conflict was, declared Calhoun in 1837, between the idea of a 'Federal Republic . . . the constituent parts of which were States' and 'a national consolidated republic, in which the constituent parts were the aggregate mass of the American people.'[5] 'The principle of States' rights was incarnate in the historical life of the Southern people,' Professor Gildersleeve testifies; the rank and file of the masses were for that theory of government and were not led or coerced to support it by Southern leaders.[6]

[1] *Creed of the Old South:* Basil L. Gildersleeve, 45–6. Professor Gildersleeve was born and brought up in the South and there laid the foundations of that mastery of Greek which, in later life, gave him fame as one of the foremost classical scholars of his time. On the outbreak of the war he enlisted in the Southern army and became a member of Gen. Gordon's staff. He took part in many battles and was seriously wounded in the Valley of Virginia, 1864.

[2] Calhoun, *Works*, III, 178.

Southern feeling was accurately expressed by poems which, for the most part, appeared in newspapers. A good example of these was one entitled 'Georgia' in the *Augusta Mirror* in 1839, reprinted in Buckingham, I, 216–8.

[3] 'Discourse on the Genius of the Federative System of the United States:' Beverly Tucker in *Southern Literary Messenger*, IV, 761–9 (1838).

[4] Gildersleeve, 37. [5] Senate Speech, Dec. 27, 1837. *Works*, III, 166.

[6] Gildersleeve, 31–2; Pulszky, I, 120 (1853).

Patriotism of locality was, the Southern people believed, elemental patriotism, the source of all genuine patriotism. That sublime emotion was really possible only in small units; so the State was basic, the Nation subsidiary.[1] Attachment to the soil, loyalty to the State, existed in the Southern breast to a degree scarcely apprehended in the North.[2] 'Take away this local patriotism and you take out all the color that is left in American life,' still insists the voice of the old South.[3]

So the South stood for the Constitution as it was, with all its guarantees, and with all powers, not expressly delegated to the Federal Government, reserved to the States. It stood, too, for established order and against the many innovations which, as the slavery dispute went forward, were advanced in Europe and the North — suffrage for women, relaxation of matrimonial laws and customs, interference of government with private enterprise, and socialistic teachings of French theorists. The loose views of marriage and the decadence of the family in America, were regarded as indications of a general decline.[4] The South said, and the South believed, that abolitionism and socialism threatened to engulf the world. Look at France, 'where the atheistic ravings of Proudhon, the insane socialism of Louis

[1] Tucker, in *Southern Literary Messenger*, IV, 761–9 (1838).

[2] Buckingham, II, 79.

[3] Gildersleeve, 34.

A novel entitled *The Partisan Leader*, published in 1836, was reviewed in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, III, 73–87. The encroachments of the Federal Government on the rights of the States were forecast and finally this process resulted in a consolidated government with the powers of a monarchy and the South seceded, except Virginia, which was forcibly kept in submission. In this state of things the 'Partisan Leader' took the field. The novel was published as by Edward William Sydney, a pseudonym of Beverly Tucker.

[4] The South put particular emphasis upon this feature of social decay in the North — witness the indifference to family ties, the bad manners of children, etc. Hundley, 75.

Fitzhugh, 113, thus stated the Southern view: 'Marriage in the South is a Christian ordinance as well as a civil contract, to be celebrated only by ministers of the Gospel. At the North marriage is a mere bargain, like the purchase of a horse, with the difference that the wife cannot be swapped off. . . . We are not surprised that frequent wife murder should result from their low, sordid, worldly view of the marriage tie; and still less surprised that, with these, and a hundred other ill consequences, arising from their sort of marriage, that women's conventions should be held to assert her rights to liberty, independence and breeches, and that sympathizing bachelors in the ranks of socialism propose to dispense with this troublesome and inconvenient relation altogether.'

Blanc, or the profligate councils of the debauchee Rollin' were accepted as the teachings of liberty; while the North, 'where mere Numbers reign supreme,' was 'the congenial soil of every species of fanaticism.' [1]

The South would have none of it; the South with her ideas and practice of order and decorum was, loftily exclaimed Southern writers, the stable and stabilizing element of American life. 'Oneida Perfectionists would no sooner be tolerated in Virginia than Pyrrhic Dances and human sacrifices to Moloch.' [2] A great wave of radicalism was sweeping over the world while the anti-slavery agitation was in progress; and Southern thinkers and the Southern people concluded that abolition, consolidation, and other 'socialistic' Northern tendencies were but manifestations in America of that philosophy of iconoclasm which, if it prevailed, would destroy liberty and imperil civilization itself.[3] 'The abolitionist . . . was considered not so much the friend of the negro as the enemy of society,' relates Professor Gildersleeve.[4]

Brooding over the attacks on Southern character, society, and institutions, and growing ever more defiant, embittered, and boastful, the Southern mind welcomed another idea which was to have decided influence on Southern policy. In 1834 Chevalier pointed out that the people of the South were fundamentally different from those of the North. 'They are the same men who cut each other's throats in England, under the name of Round-

[1] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XVI, 376–9 (June, 1850).

[2] Fitzhugh, 110. A society of communists which started in Vermont in 1838 was established at Oneida, N.Y., in 1847, and was popularly called 'The Oneida Perfectionists.' Its basic ideas were community of labor and property, free-will, marriage without ceremony and without permanent ties, and community support, education, and control, of children.

[3] Fitzhugh, 205. This view was thus stated to Madame Pulszky in 1853: 'After the abolition of slavery nothing can be reasonably expected but the deluge; all our institutions will be swept away, and anarchy will begin. Slavery alone maintains order, society, and family in the United States against Communism, Socialism, and all the "*isms*" of Europe. The conservative feeling of the South is the natural consequence of slavery.' Pulszky, II, 50.

[4] Gildersleeve, 47. 'Not that the inhabitants of the South regard slavery as necessary to the wealth of the planter; for on this point many of them agree with their Northern countrymen in freely admitting that slavery is prejudicial to their interests; but they are convinced that, however prejudicial it may be, they hold their lives upon no other tenure.' *Democracy in America:* Alexis de Tocqueville (ed. 1839), 375–6.

heads and Cavaliers,' and they would have done the same thing in America, 'had not Providence thrown them wide apart.' At great length the French investigator elaborated this thesis.[1] All over the South this thought grew until it hardened into a conviction. Ethnologically the Southerner was the superior of the man of the North, they believed and earnestly said; the one was the descendant of the Norman, the other of the ancient Briton, from whom the Puritan sprang. So the North had been settled by 'disaffected religionists,' grumblers and busy-bodies; the South by the offspring of 'that race who have established law, order and government over the earth.' [2]

The immense foreign immigration to the North strengthened this Southern feeling of racial superiority; and the vogue throughout the South of the novels of Sir Walter Scott, which were more widely read than all other books of the period, greatly influenced Southern character.[3] No phase of the development of sentiment in the South is more engaging than the progress of the idea, as revealed in Southern literature, that the people of that section were essentially unlike those of the North and of a better stock. This feature of the sectional conflict we shall often behold as the struggle draws nearer. Southern repugnance to economic convulsion was, Southern thinkers believed, instinctive as well as reasoned; it had its roots in racial origins. Deeper than economic or constitutional causes, as deep indeed as the biological sources of slavery, the contest of North and South was, Southern writers finally declared, 'between the lawless and fierce democracy of the one and the high commanding conservatism of the other.' [4]

Thus the South was conservative — profoundly, intensely, militantly conservative. In 1853, Olmsted found that Southern men believed that there were 'seeds, at present almost inert, of disaster at the North, against which Slavery will be their protection. . . . The North, say they, has progressed under the high pressure of unlimited competition; as the population grows

[1] Chevalier, 114–24, 150–3.

[2] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XXX, 401–9.

[3] *Jefferson Davis:* H. J. Eckenrode, 10–1.

[4] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XXXIII, 112.

denser, there will be terrific explosions, disaster, and ruin.' [1] The Southern people believed that the South would be saved from such convulsions by her conservative convictions which rested on localism and slavery. 'The institution is *based* on *conservatism*,' declared Stephens in 1860, and 'everything that weakens this has a tendency to weaken the institution.' [2] Expressing the same idea twenty-three years earlier, Calhoun announced that, as to the conflict between labor and capital in the North, 'the weight of the South has [been] and will ever be found on the conservative side.' [3]

Particular grievances fused these Southern opinions. The Constitution guaranteed the return to their owners of slaves escaping into other States; the Supreme Court, through Justice Story of Massachusetts, had unanimously decided that this guarantee must be carried out by act of Congress, and had declared that the Constitution could not have been established or the Federal Government created without that provision in the fundamental law of the nation.[4] Yet citizens of Northern States

[1] *Slave States:* Olmsted, 183–4.

[2] Stephens to J. H. Smith, July 10, 1860. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 486–7. Italics Stephens'.

[3] Senate Speech, Jan. 10, 1838. *Works*, III, 180.

[4] Edward Prigg *vs.* The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 16 Peters, 539–614, January Term, 1842.

By the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 the Constitutional provisions for the delivery of runaway slaves to the owner, were to be executed by State officials. In 1826 the Legislature of Pennsylvania enacted that to take out of that State by force or fraud, any negro or mulatto for the purpose of slavery was a felony.

In 1832 a slave woman belonging to Margaret Ashmore escaped from Maryland into Pennsylvania. Five years later, Edward Prigg, as attorney and agent of the owner, secured from a Justice of the Peace in Pennsylvania, a warrant for the arrest of the slave and she was taken before him; but he refused to issue the certificate as required by the National Fugitive Slave Law, as Prigg had seized her without the simple process provided by the law. Therefore Prigg, himself, without a certificate, took the slave to Maryland and delivered her to Margaret Ashmore.

Two years later Prigg again went to Pennsylvania, and while there was indicted for violations of the State law of 1826. He was convicted, the judgment of the trial court was affirmed *pro forma* by the State Supreme Court and the case was taken to the Supreme Court of the United States. In reality it was an agreed case and the two parties were the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Justice Story delivered the opinion of the Court, which was unanimous, that the Pennsylvania law was unconstitutional. Chief Justice Taney, however, in a separate opinion, insisted that even Congress could not put any condition or restriction upon the right of the owner, peaceably, to recover his slave, since that right was given by the Constitution.

In the course of his opinion Justice Story declared that without the adoption of the

were forcibly resisting that part of the Federal compact and the law of Congress made in pursuance of it. Northern governors were refusing to obey Constitution and statute. What could the South do? She must either insist upon and secure the observance by other States and their citizens of the agreement by which the Union was formed, or she must submit to the violation of it. The only other possible course would be that she withdraw from the Union.

Another sore complaint irritated the Southern mind. A vast extent of territory had been added to the Republic by treaty and war. The South thought that the control of this immense domain should be divided equally between the two sections. It had been secured by Southern blood and money as well as by Northern valor and resources, by Southern statesmanship even more than by Northern.[1] So it was only fair, said Southern spokesmen, that half of it should come in as slave States — certainly, that the line established by the Missouri Compromise should be extended to the Pacific. Everybody knew that to be the spirit and true meaning of that historic adjustment, insisted all supporters of Southern demands.

Yet, said they, the North insisted on excluding slavery from every part of this wide domain — and that meant excluding the

fugitive slave provision of the Constitution 'the Union could not have been formed.' The Court's opinion was clear and emphatic that Congress had full and exclusive power to enact fugitive slave laws; but added that this sweeping power did not, of course, impair the police power of States 'to arrest and restrain runaway slaves, and remove them from their borders, and otherwise secure themselves against their depredations and evil example.'

To guard against the misuse of the police power, however, Story said, speaking for the Court: 'But such regulations can never be permitted to interfere with or to obstruct the just rights of the owner to reclaim his slave, derived from the Constitution of the United States, or with the remedies prescribed by Congress to aid and enforce the same.'

Notwithstanding a reiteration of the principle that Congress had exclusive power to legislate on the subject and that States could not interfere therewith, Story said that State magistrates did not have to obey that part of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 applicable to them and that State Legislatures might forbid them to do so. In practical effect, this language rendered useless that provision of the National statute. It was *obiter dictum*, but was made use of by Northern Legislatures to justify the enactment of State laws against the capture of fugitive slaves.

Historically, the Prigg case is one of the most important decided by the Supreme Court of the United States. Knowledge of it is indispensable to an understanding of the American conflict over slavery. For this and other adjudications of fugitive slave cases, see Channing, VI, 89, *et seq.*

[1] Fisher, 23.

South. If the North had her way, the South would speedily become a subordinate and ever-decreasing influence in the General Government — a mere province, a helpless dependency. On this point the same response took place in the Southern mind and heart that moved New England men to threaten dissolution of the Union when the Louisiana Purchase added to the Nation an imperial territory in the South and West, and seemed to doom the Northeastern influence until then equal, if not dominant, in national councils. If slavery were excluded from the new territorial acquisitions, the North would not only secure control of the National Government and degrade the South to a colonial status, but, through that control, would ultimately abolish slavery, with all the economic ruin and social desolation which emancipation would entail. So reasoned the Southern people.[1]

Thus, as the troubled years wore on, a sentiment for disunion spread throughout the South. Almost coincident with the beginning of the abolition crusade a counter movement for secession started in that section; and every circumstance gave it strength and momentum. The Southern people believed that they had a right to withdraw from the Union, if they wished; and thousands in the North thought so, too. Even Southern men who opposed secession on other grounds, had no doubt as to the principle; and as the controversy progressed, an ever increasing number accepted the opinion that separation was necessary and wise. Yet they did so with reluctance and regret. As late as 1850 *DeBow's Review* declared that every Southern man realized that the value of the Union was 'superlatively great' and 'glorious, too,' and that the crisis had been forced by Northern 'fanatics.' [2]

Time and time again Calhoun gloomily declared that from the very first he had seen that Southern secession would be the inevitable result of the Northern attack on slavery. That institution was so interwoven in the very fibres of Southern society — economic, social, and political, that to destroy it would destroy the South, to assail it was to assail the South. Thus came

[1] Mackay, II, 146. This was the burden of most of Calhoun's speeches.

[2] *DeBow's Review*, IX, 121–2.

the Southern warning, written by Calhoun and signed by Senators and Representatives from that section, and proclaimed to the Nation just before Lincoln's term in the House expired.[1]

That solemn but spirited pronouncement was no idle threat of an impatient and inflammatory faction; it was, instead, the voice of the South. While, from party considerations, Southern Whigs like Stephens and Toombs, refused to sign it, so swiftly did events move forward, that, in less than a year, ancient party lines were broken and practically all Southern men, in response to a well-nigh unanimous Southern demand, stood shoulder to shoulder in defence of Southern institutions and in defiant resistance to what they declared to be Northern 'aggressions' upon the 'rights' and the very life of the South. Yet a strong union sentiment still lingered in the hearts of Southern people, and we shall see it in action at a decisive moment during the crisis immediately before us.

Stated with utmost brevity and in broad outline, such was the Southern view of the situation when the critical year of 1850 arrived: considerations of property, of government, of society, of race were involved — economic, political, social, biological considerations. By the convening of the Thirty-first Congress, the quarrel had become dangerously acute and the Union under the Constitution was in peril. That event which Washington had foreseen and the thought of which shook even his brave heart, seemed near at hand. So came the epochal debate to which we are now to listen and the historic compromise that Lincoln so whole-heartedly approved.

[1] See Vol. I, p. 484, *supra*.

CHAPTER II

WAR POSTPONED: THE GREAT COMPROMISE

I have never before addressed any assembly so oppressed, so appalled, so anxious. CLAY, Feb. 5, 1850.

I see nothing short of conquest on the one side or submission on the other. DAVIS, Feb. 13, 1850.

I speak for the preservation of the Union. Hear me for my cause. WEBSTER, March 7, 1850.

THE Thirty-first Congress assembled in a swirl of emotions, aggressive groups from North and South bristling, belligerent, defiant; the moderate and the weak trembling with apprehension, uncertainty, and fear. 'Never,' wrote Alexander H. Stephens, long afterwards, 'had any Congress convened under so much excitement.' [1]

Two months before the meeting of Congress, a State Convention at Jackson, Mississippi, had issued a call for a general Southern Convention to be held at Nashville, Tennessee, on June 3, 1850; and, hard upon the opening of the National Legislature, Southern States began to endorse the project and select delegates. No concealment was made that the Nashville Convention would urge withdrawal from the Union if Congress enacted proposed legislation which, as the South believed, was hostile to that section.[2]

The crowds within the sprawling, unkempt Capitol thrummed with excitement, like a taut wire in a high wind. The country was breathless with suspense. Could antagonism be composed? Could the Constitution be preserved? Could the Union be saved? Was adjustment possible? The time and place called for conciliation and restraint, for wisdom, for statesmanship. 'Great events are near at hand,' said the National Democratic

[1] Stephens, II, 177.

[2] *a.* The Wilmot proviso, expressly excluding slavery from the territories; *b.* admission of California as a free State; *c.* abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; *d.* abolition of the slave trade among the slave States; *e.* refusal to pass a new Fugitive Slave Law in place of the existing defective statute.

organ. 'The time has come when the Union can be preserved only by the compromising spirit which framed it.' [1]

Again the Senate was the arena of supreme parliamentary conflict, again the place of historic argument and eloquence, again the chamber of final council and decision. Three old men were there, the foremost statesmen of their day and among the outstanding statesmen of history. Each was nearing the end of his life, one was dying, the other two not far distant from their graves; and all knew their condition. Each had striven mightily in great political battles, each had made a brilliant and enduring record. All three had been distinguished members of the National House, leaders of the Senate, and each had been Secretary of State.

Of all public men since Washington, these were the three whom the tall, gaunt, despondent, humorous but profoundly thoughtful lawyer in Springfield, Illinois, most admired. Lincoln read and pondered every word uttered by Clay, Calhoun, and Webster during the momentous session which we are now to review with him, and he read, too, all that was said by the newer men in the Senate, each of them attractive, commanding, purposeful — Douglas, Jefferson Davis, Chase, and Seward. Nor was he less attentive to alarming words and tumultuous scenes in the House.

Lincoln had just left Congress; the great debate to which we are now to listen, was, in reality, but the conclusion of the controversy he had heard while a Representative from the Seventh District of Illinois. His mind was in Washington rather than in Springfield, and engrossed in politics rather than the law. He took the *Congressional Globe* and the *National Intelligencer*, the great Whig organ; and the speeches of outstanding members of the House and Senate were also printed in the Springfield and Chicago papers. The words and deeds of those who engaged in the historic discussion of 1850 were to be woven into the strange and variegated fabric of Lincoln's destiny.

No sooner did Congress assemble than the first explosion came. For seventeen days the House could not elect a speaker. Southern members were determined that bills should not pass

[1] *Washington Union*, Dec. 1, 1849.

abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia or excluding it from the Territories. Richard Kidder Meade of Virginia declared that 'if these outrages are to be committed upon my people, I trust in God, sir, that my eyes have rested upon the last Speaker of the House of Representatives.' [1] Meade said that while Northern and Southern men 'of our race' were equally brave, there was a 'difference between men contending for their firesides, and the robbers who are seeking to despoil them of their rights, and degrade them before the world.'

William Duer of New York called Meade a 'disunionist.'

'It is false,' cried Meade.

'You are a liar, sir,' snapped Duer.

'Quick as thought,' records the official reporter, 'Mr. Meade made a rush towards Mr. Duer.' Friends surrounded each man. 'Indescribable confusion followed. . . . The House was like a heaving billow.' The Sergeant-at-Arms carried the mace on high among the enraged Representatives. Order was finally restored.[2]

Meade challenged Duer, and friends, 'with some difficulty,' prevented a duel.[3]

But the lurid incident had uncapped the volcano. Amid repeated applause, Toombs, 'his black, uncombed hair standing out from his massive head, as if charged with electricity, his eyes glowing like coals of fire, and his sentences rattling forth like volleys of musketry,' as a newspaper correspondent described him,[4] furiously assailed those who urged the objectionable legislation. If it should pass, thundered Toombs, '*I am for disunion;* and . . . I will devote all I am and all I have on earth to its consummation.' [5]

As we have seen, Toombs was one of Lincoln's friends and associates in the preceding Congress and both were Whigs. A much closer friend of Lincoln, his former colleague, Edward Dickinson Baker, for whom his second son was named, now Representative from the Galena district of Illinois, instantly replied, also amid applause, to the furious member from Georgia. He did not believe, the North did not believe, that

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. 1, 26 (Dec. 13, 1849). [2] *Ib.*, 27.
[3] *Reminiscences:* Poore, 1, 361–2. [4] *Ib.*, 360.
[5] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. 1, 27–8. Italics Toombs'.

Southern members were in earnest, he said; did not believe 'that here, in this Hall, there is one man who chambers in his secret heart a purpose so accursed.'

'We will teach you that we are in earnest,' shouted Daniel Wallace of South Carolina.

How? Baker demanded.

'I spoke in the name of the people of the South, . . . they will have their rights in spite of the North,' answered Wallace.

'Sir,' said Baker, 'we do not believe the Union *can ever be dissolved.*' Southern members could not mean what they said. 'A dissolution of this Union is, must be, shall be, impossible, as long as an American heart beats in an American bosom.'

Baker's defiance brought to his feet a man whom, as has appeared, Lincoln liked and admired above all others in the House. 'Sir,' said Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, 'every word uttered by my colleague [Toombs] meets my hearty response. . . . I tell you . . . before that God, who rules the universe, I would rather that the southern country should perish . . . than submit for one instant to degradation. . . . Whether the people of the North believe it or not, . . . the day in which aggression is consummated, . . . this Union is dissolved. . . . Be not deceived.' [1]

Still Northern members were not convinced; many regarded such expressions as mere froth of heated temper. William Ferguson Colcock of South Carolina undertook to convince them. He was quite placid, he said, when he declared that if the obnoxious bills should be enacted, he then and there pledged himself to 'introduce a resolution in this House declaring in terms, *that this Union ought to be dissolved.*' [2]

Northern radicals were scarcely less extravagant than those of the South. Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, who was to be so powerful and intolerant a factor in Congress during and after Lincoln's administration, assailed Southern members with characteristic ferocity. Their threats were 'contemptible gasconade,' he said. The Southern 'conspiracy' to dissolve the government by refusing appropriations unless Southern de-

[1] *Cong. Globe,* 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. 1, 28. Italics Baker's.

[2] *Ib.,* 29. Italics Colcock's.

mands were granted, was 'treason, rank treason against the nation!' The South boasted of its gallantry in war — that section *had* furnished officers, Presidents, ambassadors; and 'has consented that the younger sons of her dilapidated houses should monopolize the places of clerks and messengers to the Government. But whence are drawn the common soldiers,' who did the fighting and won the battles? 'Almost entirely from the free States,' said Stevens. He made a sound and able argument against slavery, but he managed to insert fiery and insulting words.[1]

An experienced Washington newspaper correspondent truthfully reported the situation: 'The excitement . . . is here at an extravagant pitch. It is not confined to Southern men, though it was from them that its first manifestation appeared. The Northern blood has now become heated.' [2] Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire presented a petition from Pennsylvania and Delaware 'praying for the immediate and peaceful dissolution of the Union.' [3] Other papers of the same kind were signed by negroes and whites in Pennsylvania.[4] In Massachusetts large numbers of secession petitions were circulated by the Abolitionists,[5] and Wendell Phillips wrote frankly: 'We are Disunionists.' [6] These ardent persons resorted to verse to express the reasons for their demand:

'This is our defense.
Though we break our father's promise, we have nobler duties first;
The traitor to humanity is the traitor most accursed!
Man is more than Constitution — better rot beneath the sod
Than be true to Church and State while we are doubly false to God.' [7]

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[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 141–3. Feb. 20, 1850.

[2] *New Orleans Picayune*, March 11, 1850.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 319. This petition led to a spirited debate, lasting for the most of two days. Douglas started it by sharply objecting to receiving it.

'Sir, is this Senate under obligations to receive with respect . . . propositions to dissolve the American Union? . . . We have no power . . . to grant the prayer, . . . if we had the power, it is moral treason to give countenance and encouragement to the prayer of such a petition.'

[4] *Pennsylvanian*, clipped in *Liberator*, March 1, 1850.

[5] *Ib.*, Feb. 22, 1850; *Boston Journal*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 13, 1850. The *Liberator* declared with approval that this had been going on for 'several years.'

[6] *Liberator*, March 22, 1850. [7] *Ib.*, Feb. 22, 1850.

So inflamed were Representatives and Senators, so perilous the condition, that President Taylor thought it necessary to inform Congress and the country of the attitude of the administration. 'As to the Constitution and the Union,' he said at Fredericksburg, Virginia, 'I have taken an oath to support the one and I cannot do so without preserving the other. . . . We must cherish the Constitution to the last . . . in all time, preserve the Union at all hazards.' [1]

Taylor might as well not have spoken. Nobody paid the slightest attention to what he said. In eleven years we shall hear Lincoln make the same appeal, using some of Taylor's words, and with as little effect. At the time Lincoln's newspaper mouthpiece at Springfield enthusiastically praised the President's statement.[2]

At the present day, the extreme peril of the situation can only be realized by a study of the speeches of the more moderate of Southern members. Because of his character and political affiliations, that of Henry Washington Hilliard of Alabama is strikingly illustrative.[3] Charles Allen of Massachusetts had scoffed at his Southern associates as having spoken in passion and as not really meaning what they said about impending dissolution of the Union. Allen has never faced 'a calmer man' than he was, the Representative from Alabama said in reply, when he told the House '*that the Union of these States is in great peril.*' The North was utterly oblivious of Southern 'feeling and purpose . . . in regard to the threatened encroachments on their rights. I have never known throughout the entire southern country so settled and deep a feeling. . . . I solemnly declare — speaking from a thorough acquaintance with that people, a people among whom I was born and brought up — that

[1] *New Orleans Picayune*, March 11, 1850. [2] *Illinois Journal*, March 1, 1850.

[3] Hilliard had been a professor in the University of Alabama, a lay Methodist preacher, a Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium, and a regent of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. He was an important member of the Whig Party, and made his campaign for Congress as a 'Unionist,' assuring his constituents that Congress would not pass measures unfriendly to the South. Perhaps no man better understood Southern sentiment than he.

In 1860 Hilliard supported the 'Union Ticket,' Bell and Everett, as the only method of preserving the Union peaceably. Like Stephens, he strenuously opposed secession, but when Alabama withdrew from the Union, Hilliard went with his State, raised several thousand men and became a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army.

if this legislation is to be persisted in, THIS UNION CANNOT STAND.' [1]

Such were the views, not of Southern fire-eaters, but of steady Union men of the South at the beginning of the Thirty-first Congress. The expressions of Southern extremists, while made in high excitement and fiery language, were no more alarming than those of their quiet but equally determined associates. Lincoln knew these men well and some of them were his fellow partisans.

Conservative papers, North and South, vainly strove to reassure the people. The *New York Courier and Enquirer* alleged that a 'decided majority' in the North, as shown by the press of that section, was moderate and supporters of the Constitution with all its guaranties; the 'noisy but few abolitionists . . . as contemptible in numbers, as they are criminal in their designs,' would amount to nothing if 'Southern alarmists' did not magnify their importance; only 'insane fanatics' were for disunion. Yet in the South, said the New York paper, the press was 'violent, speeches . . . inflammatory, the masses . . . excited.' [2]

Lincoln's organ in Springfield stated that it had long believed that certain Southern politicians were 'determined, if possible, to bring about a dissolution of the Union.' [3] The West was for the Union, cried the *Alton Telegraph*, and would not tolerate secession.[4] Such admonitions were, for the moment, without effect; rather, the conflagration spread, and was to continue to grow until it should be checked and subdued by the wisdom and daring of the ablest statesman of the time, sustained by the great body of the Nation.

In the Senate, a wicked tongue of flame licked forth soon after the holiday adjournment. The venerable Senator William Upham of Vermont had presented strong resolutions against slavery passed by the Legislature of that State, and, on January

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 33–4. Italics and capitals Hilliard's.

[2] *New York Courier and Enquirer*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1850. The *Courier* named Louisiana, North Carolina, Missouri, and Kentucky as 'honorable exceptions' to disunion tendency of Southern States.

[3] *Illinois Journal*, Feb. 6, 1850.

[4] *Alton* (Ill.) *Telegraph*, Feb. 1, 15, 1850.

10, Senator Jeremiah Clemens of Alabama [1] made them the text for a frank speech. Societies in the North were slandering Southern character by 'foulest libels,' said Clemens, and making 'the most terrible appeals to all the worst passions of the slave;' advocating murder, arson, and 'the violation of our wives and daughters;' hiring lecturers to 'inflame' the Northern mind against the Southern people. 'We do not intend to stand still and have our throats cut.' Unless the Constitution was respected and 'its promises held sacred,' the Union could not endure. Perhaps it was too late even now — perhaps the Union was 'already at an end.' Certainly the 'most weak and timid man' in Alabama 'would scorn your alliance, and shatter your Confederacy,' if Northern assaults were continued. Senator Clemens declared that he had come to his conclusions slowly and with bitterness, for in boyhood he had 'looked upon the Union as a holy thing, and worshipped it;' and in manhood he had 'gone through that in its defence which would have shriveled thousands of the wretched silk-worms who, in peaceful times, earn a cheap reputation for patriotism by professing unbounded love for the Union.' [2]

Such was the desperate and ever more alarming situation as the lowering winter of 1849–50 wore on. Except in armed warfare, no men ever faced a predicament more deadly than that which Clay and Webster then confronted. All the genius, all the skill, all the courage, all the reputation and influence of these two statesmen were required to still that tempest and save the American Nation from shipwreck. From his earliest manhood, Lincoln had looked upon them as the preëminent men of the Republic in their time, had followed their leadership, adopted their political and economic philosophy and was now ready to accept — and, as we shall see, did accept — their solution of the vexed and terrible problem.

[1] Clemens had been elected as a 'moderate,' but in this session developed into a radical. He was a college man, an accomplished lawyer and held many offices. Clemens fought for Texas in her war for independence and, in the Mexican War, was promoted for gallantry. He opposed the secession of Alabama, but yielded to popular demand and went with his State. In 1864 he advocated the reëlection of Lincoln and defended his policy.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 52–4.

On January 29, 1850, Clay rose in his place and offered his famous compromise, designed to preserve 'the peace, concord, and harmony of the union' by settling the controversy between the States, 'arising out of the institution of slavery.' Clay's resolutions proposed the admission of California as a free State; territorial government for the remainder of the Mexican acquisitions without reference to slavery; settlement of the boundary between Texas and New Mexico; abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, but continuance of slavery there as long as Maryland insisted upon it; the enactment of a strong fugitive slave law in place of the Act of 1793, which was no longer effective; and the assertion that Congress had no power to interfere with the slave trade in the slave-holding States.[1]

A week later,[2] the venerable Kentuckian took the floor in support of his proposals. The Senate Chamber was crowded and the corridors were so thronged that the Vice-President ordered all doors closed and the anterooms cleared.[3] Clay was in his seventy-third year and showed his age. His cheeks were sunken, nose pinched, head bald on top, and a fringe of long, gray hair fell upon his shoulders. He was dressed in solid black, and from a high black satin stock emerged a 'huge white shirt-collar, which reached to his ears.' [4]

Clay made no effort to conceal his profound emotion, and began with a prayer that God would avert disaster — never had he spoken to 'any assembly so oppressed, so appalled, so anxious,' he solemnly avowed. The cause of the crisis which had arisen was the catering of the regular political organizations in the North to 'a small party called Abolitionists' in order to carry elections, Clay bitterly asserted.

Why not adjust differences by recognizing facts? he asked. California had excluded slavery by the unanimous vote of her Constitutional Convention, many of whom were men of Southern birth, and it was unlikely that slavery ever would go to New Mexico because of its mountains and barren soil. Ignorance of that fact had produced the foolish Wilmot proviso, said

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 244–6; XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 115.

[2] February 5, 1850.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 115. [4] Poore, I, 363.

Clay; the North had got what was 'worth a thousand Wilmot provisos.'

The aged Senator did not speak long on the first day, and during his exposition he made reference more than once to his years and weakness. On the second day he began by paying tribute to the 'vast assemblage of beauty, grace, elegance, and intelligence' which had again come to hear him. Congress had power to exclude slavery from the District of Columbia, he said; but it would be bad faith to exercise it, because Maryland never thought that slavery would be abolished in the District, when she ceded it to the United States as a place for the National Capital.[1]

But the slave trade ought to be forbidden in the District, Clay insisted; the daily sight of '*cortèges* which pass along our avenues of manacled human beings,' horrified and enraged many who otherwise would not be interested. How senseless! Stop it, and 'we shall have peace for thirty years.' To do so would be nothing new. Kentucky, Mississippi, and other slave States already prohibited importation of slaves for sale.

A stronger fugitive slave law must be passed. On that question, asserted Clay, the South had 'just and serious cause of complaint against the free States.' The fugitive slave provision in the National Constitution bound Congress, States, State officials, and 'every *man* in the Union.' Yet many Northern States had enacted laws against the capture and return of fugitive slaves.

Congress had no power to interfere with the slave trade between slave States. The South contended that Congress could not legislate at all on slavery, but that position was neither sound nor wise. Yet on that point, Clay exclaimed, 'this Union is threatened with subversion' — this Union, under which and because of which, the American people had achieved a growth and prosperity unexampled in the annals of mankind.

Disunion would not secure to the South a single demand she made — the admission of slavery to the territories, the continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia, the return of

[1] Virginia had also ceded part of the District, but that portion had been receded to her; therefore, Clay asserted, Virginia was no longer concerned.

runaway slaves. There would be hundreds and thousands of these fugitives where there now was one, if the South withdrew from the Union, asserted Clay.

No State, no section had a right to secede. If secession should be attempted, war would be inevitable — war and disunion were 'identical and inseparable.' And such a war! 'Furious, bloody, implacable, exterminating,' and decisive of the fate of free government itself. Even if the States should agree to dissolve the Union and form a separate government, the sections would be at war within sixty days — 'in less than sixty days.'

'Mr. President, I am directly opposed to any purpose of secession. . . . The Constitution . . . was made, not merely for the generation which then existed, but for posterity, undefined, unlimited, permanent and perpetual . . . and for every subsequent State which might come into the Union, binding themselves by that indissoluble bond.' [1]

Clay's proposals divided the South. The more radical of the people of that section opposed them, the moderate who wished for an adjustment accepted them with reluctance and misgiving. The South did not agree with the great statesman, said the *Alexandria Gazette*, but hoped that he had laid the foundation for an honorable compromise.[2] And we shall see this sentiment slowly spreading throughout the South as the contest in Washington proceeds. The *Illinois Journal* applauded Clay's speech and denounced the 'treason' of the South.[3]

In the management of his compromise proposals, Clay often found it necessary to take the floor, to explain this item and that, to soothe irritations, to repel attacks. Whenever the public thought that he might speak, great crowds went to the Capitol to hear him. Women, especially, thronged the Senate Chamber, filled the galleries, jostled in the corridors. 'The ladies are, *to a man*, the enemies of disunion,' wrote a Washington correspondent of a northern journal, copied into a conservative paper in Virginia.[4] Once when Clay rose to speak, he

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 115–27.

[2] *Alexandria Gazette*, Feb. 15, 1850.

[3] *Illinois Journal*, Feb. 12, 1850.

[4] The Washington correspondent of the *Boston Courier*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 9, 1850. Italics in the *Gazette*.

found himself 'imbedded in a nest of the fair sex,' who were so numerous that 'no Senator could get across the Chamber without thrusting his head under a bonnet.' [1]

As the stormy weeks passed, Clay's horror of secession grew ever stronger in expression, his love of the Union ever more ardent. The people of any territory applying for statehood 'had a right to decide whether they would admit or exclude slavery,' he asserted. It was because he had profoundly deliberated upon the situation and carefully measured consequences not only to the whole country, but 'affecting all mankind . . . the existence of self-government . . . the preservation of liberty itself' — it was because of his mature consideration of these results that he had resolved to put forth all his remaining strength 'to avert the greatest of all human calamities, not only that could befall this country, but that could befall the whole race of civilized man.' [2]

Taunted by Senator Henry S. Foote of Mississippi [3] for voting against the South, although himself a Senator from a slave State, Clay retorted with wrathful but majestic eloquence. 'Sir, I know no South, no North, no East, no West to which I owe any allegiance. I owe allegiance to two sovereignties, and only two: one is to the sovereignty of this Union, and the other is to the sovereignty of the State of Kentucky. My allegiance is to this Union and to my State; but if gentlemen suppose they can exact from me an acknowledgment of allegiance to any ideal or future contemplated confederacy of the South, I here declare that I owe no allegiance to it.' [4]

The new South now spoke through one of its younger men in the Senate. He was not yet a disunionist, but fairly reflected the growing opinion throughout the South, that unless all Southern rights were strictly observed, withdrawal from the Union would become inevitable. On February 13, one week

[1] The Washington correspondent of the *Boston Courier*, Feb. 8, 1850.

[2] *Works*, IX, 403, 405–6.

[3] Foote had been elected to the Senate as a 'Unionist' in 1847. In 1850 he was considered a 'moderate,' because he wished to adjust differences between the sections. He disagreed sharply with Jefferson Davis as to the nature and extent of secession sentiment in Mississippi. When the Confederacy was established, however, he went with his State and was elected to the Confederate Congress.

[4] *Works*, IX, 397–8.

after Clay began his first compromise speech, the galleries were again packed with expectant crowds, the corridors again filled, and seats in the Senate Chamber were yielded to groups of eager women.[1] When order was restored, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi rose in his place to state the views of the less extreme of the Southern radicals.

He was in his forty-third year, nine months older than Lincoln, and, like Lincoln, a native of Kentucky. He was slightly over six feet tall, slim, graceful, and with military erectness and bearing; for he was a graduate of West Point and for many years had been an officer in the Regular Army. His face was long and thin, his eyes large and gray-blue, hair black, forehead high and intellectual. His hands were noticeable for their slender elegance, and his voice had a peculiar musical quality, not unlike that of Wendell Phillips. His attire, while in strict accord with fashion, was modest and unobtrusive. His manner was considerate, his bearing, while cordial, was dignified and grave. Although not by birth a member of the dominant social caste of the South, he was to become its mouthpiece and leader. As yet, however, his reputation in Washington was 'purely of a military character.' [2]

The South asserted its right to an equality of enjoyment in the territories. National parties were dissolving, had already ceased to function, Davis said, and designing Northern politicians made use of that 'factious, disorganizing, revolutionary spirit,' called abolitionism, in their attempt to erect sectional parties upon the ruins of political organizations which were truly national. 'Considering it, as I do,' said Davis, 'the cold, calculating purpose of those who seek for sectional dominion, I see nothing short of conquest on the one side, or submission on the other.'

It was sectional divisions, Davis continued, which weaken the bonds of the Union. What had caused these divisions? Why had the South been estranged, embittered? Northern slander of

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 356. Feb. 13, 1850.

[2] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, May 19, in issue of June 9, 1850. This conservative and Unionist Southern paper was unfriendly to Davis, and declared that he 'has not yet given the first token of a statesman.' The *Picayune* classed him among the half dozen 'Hotspurs of the South.'

Southern character 'and the character of our fathers;' Northern 'attempts to degrade us in the eyes of Christendom;' Northern assaults upon the Southern people; Northern organizations formed for the express purpose of hostility to the South; the denial by Northern States of the Constitutional rights of the South; this very agitation in Congress — these, according to Davis, were the sources of Southern resentment and alarm.

The South looked forward to the day 'when the power to remodel the Constitution, being possessed, will be exercised,' by the North, and slavery abolished. Men might talk as they pleased, and for political effect, but just that was what the North intended to do and would do in the end. So the South must meet the issue now, solemnly announced the future Confederate President. Otherwise the Southern people would become '*an inferior class, a degraded caste in the Union.*' [1]

The Federal Government was but the agent of all the States; ought any of them to support that agent when it proposed to destroy what its duty was to protect? State obligation ceased when National instead of Federal power was assumed by the General Government. 'State allegiance thenceforward resumes its right to demand the service, the whole service, of all its citizens.'

Neither section should have the power to trample on the rights of the other. A balance of power was the vital principle of the Constitution. The ideal situation would be the control by the North of one House of Congress, and by the South of the other. Davis expected no good to come from 'compromise' legislation; even the proposed Fugitive Slave Law would avail nothing. No act of Congress could be enforced in any State if public opinion was against it.

Citizens of the South had a Constitutional right to take their slaves to the 'common' territories, which belonged to the States in common, and Congress could not destroy that right. The Missouri Compromise had 'derived its validity from the acquiescence of the States, and not from the act of Congress.' The Federal Government had no more to do with slave property

[1] Italics author's. Practically all Southern speakers and writers made mention of this root of Southern fear and complaint.

than with any other species of property. Moreover it was axiomatic that 'all property is best managed where Governments least interfere.'

Why was every abolition assault on the Union ignored, and every Southern movement condemned, inquired Davis? Southern conventions asked only the observance of the Constitution. That was but the expression of the spirit of our race — the spirit that produced the Revolution, the spirit that secured Magna Charta. 'That spirit has come down to us. . . . We will not permit aggressions. We will defend our rights; and if it be necessary, we will claim from this Government, as the barons of England claimed from John, the grant of another *magna charta* for our protection.' That was the spirit of the South! Did history show that it could be flouted and outraged?

What grievance had the North? Davis asked. Against her own immediate interests the South joined the North in the Revolution; the South resented British impressment of Northern sailors and drew the sword in their defence; the South furnished the cargoes for Northern shipping, supplied the staple for Northern factories, bought Northern-made fabrics at market prices, plus a heavy tariff. What, then, was the cause of Northern hostility to the South? 'The fact that the South held the African race in bondage, being the descendants of those who were mainly purchased from the people of the North. And this was the great cause.' This was the reason that the North would stop the growth of the South and draw around her 'a sanitary cordon to prevent the extension of a moral leprosy.' Must the South submit? No! 'If for that it shall be written the South resisted, it would be but in keeping with every page she has added to the history of our country.'

Who wanted the foreign slave trade restored? Certainly, the South did not, declared Davis. New England had secured the prolongation of that commerce for her profit, he said; and not until after that foreign trade had been abolished, was there 'declamation' in that section against slavery — an outcry by those who had grown 'rich in the traffic.' So far as Southern interests were concerned, abolition of the slave trade was 'a sound, wise policy,' and nobody was willing to revive it. Still,

humanly speaking, that trade had been a blessing to the negroes who by it had been brought from abject slavery and a barbarian master, and sold into a Christian land.

Only through American bondage had the negro 'ever entered the temple of civilization,' said Davis. Think of his condition in Africa! However, the African slave trade was a thing of the past and was as odious among us now, as it was with our ancestors. 'We only defend the domestic institution of slavery as it exists in the United States; the extension of which into any new Territory will not increase the number of the slaves by one single person.'

Who had sown 'the seeds of disunion,' promoted faction, prevented the formation of territorial governments? Who was responsible for the existing situation? 'It is not the South! it is not the South,' cried Davis. 'Every charge of disunion which is made on that part of the South which I in part represent, . . . I here pronounce to be grossly calumnious.' Northern newspapers, which were the chief contrivers of sectionalism, had branded Southern Representatives as 'disunionists;' they had so denounced Davis himself. How unwarranted! How outrageous!

'The son of a revolutionary soldier, attachment to this Union was among the first lessons of my childhood; bred to the service of my country, from boyhood to mature age I wore its uniform. Through the brightest portion of my life, I was accustomed to see our flag, historic emblem of the Union, rise with the rising and fall with the setting sun. I look upon it now with the affection of early love, and seek to maintain and preserve it by a strict adherence to the Constitution, . . . by the nurture of which its stars have come so much to outnumber its original stripes. . . . Shall we of the South, who have shared equally with you all your toils, all your dangers, all your adversities, and who equally rejoice in your prosperity, and your fame — shall we be denied those benefits guarantied by our compact, or gathered as the common fruits of a common country? If so, self-respect requires that we should assert them; and, as best we may, maintain that which we could not surrender without losing your respect as well as our own.' [1]

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 149–57.

So spoke the new and aggressive South. Soon the voice of the old South was heard, a harsher, more determined voice, and one which even ardent Southern men dreaded to hear.[1] On March 4, a frail, old man entered the Senate Chamber, supported by two colleagues and attended by his negro servant. He was wrapped in flannels and was so ill that he could not stand alone. He sank into his seat, his great head bending forward, his thin hands grasping the arms of his chair. A heavy mane of long, thick, gray hair swept back from his forehead and hung in a mass about his neck. Death was stamped on the rugged face of John C. Calhoun; but his steady dark eyes were still resolute, still defiant, still full of fire.[2] Too weak to speak, he had written his address and in a feeble voice asked Senator James Murray Mason [3] of Virginia to read it to the Senate.[4] Mason was then Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the Senate and reported the Fugitive Slave Bill which finally became the law.

From the very beginning of the abolition assault, said Calhoun, he had foreseen that, unless stopped, it would end in disunion; and he had striven to induce the two great political parties 'to adopt some measure to prevent so great a disaster.' But he had failed; and now all realized that the Union was in danger. How could it be preserved? That was the question — 'the greatest and the gravest question that can ever come under your consideration.'

What had imperilled the Union? The almost universal dis-

[1] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, Feb. 19, in issue of March 4, 1850. 'Some of the Southern men, who are most strenuous in support of the rights of the South, would greatly prefer that Mr. Calhoun would be silent. They say that the belief that Mr. Calhoun promotes the Southern movement for political ends is an obstruction to the movement in the South.'

[2] Poore, I, 365–6. Calhoun had been confined to his room during most of the session by a racking cough. Washington Correspondence, Feb. 26, *New Orleans Picayune*, in issue March 11, 1850.

[3] Senator Mason, a grandson of George Mason, author of the Virginia Bill of Rights, was one of the eminent men of Virginia and for ten years before the war was Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

When Virginia seceded, he went with his State, resigned from the Senate, but three months afterward was formally expelled for treason. This was the same Mason who, with John Slidell of Louisiana, was taken from the British steamer, *Trent*, on the high seas, an act which gravely embarrassed Lincoln's administration.

[4] *Washington Union*, March 6, 1850. Also *Jefferson Davis, a Memoir:* By his Wife, I, 457–8.

content of the Southern people, he answered. What had caused that feeling? Politicians had not stirred it up; on the contrary 'all the great political influences' in the South had tried to suppress excitement and had done their best to 'keep the people quiet.' The South, like the remainder of the country, had been divided 'into Whigs and Democrats,' and both parties had striven to preserve popular tranquillity throughout the anti-slavery storm. Southern irritation was spontaneous, elemental. What had produced it?

Many forces had wrought the present state of mind all over the South, but the immediate cause of it was the destruction of the equilibrium between the sections that had existed when the Constitution was adopted. Already the North outweighed the South, both in popular majority and majority of States, and this Northern preponderance was rapidly increasing.

This was not due to natural causes, but to the legislation of the Federal Government, 'which was appointed as the common agent of all, and charged with the protection of the interests and security of all.' The South had been excluded from 'common territory belonging to all the States, as the members of the Federal Union;' the South had been unjustly burdened by tariff legislation; worst of all, the very character of the Federal Government had been revolutionized by absorbing power that did not belong to it. First, it claimed the right to decide for itself the power which it could exercise, and now it insisted that it could resort to force to maintain whatever power it claims.

In short, the general government had been changed 'from a Federal Republic . . . into a great national consolidated Democracy . . . as absolute as that of the Autocrat in Russia, and as despotic in its tendency as any absolute Government that ever existed.' The rights of the States were swept away, and a single section controlled the consolidated machine which had destroyed those rights. Of course that section would favor itself where its interests conflicted with the interests of the other section.

The South could endure this in ordinary matters; but a question vital to the South existed, concerning which 'the views and

feelings of the two sections are as opposite and hostile as they can possibly be.'

That question, Calhoun insisted, was basic — 'the relation between the two races' in the South, 'which constitutes a vital portion of her social organization.' Its destruction would be the greatest 'calamity' to both white and black, and reduce the South 'to poverty, desolation, and wretchedness.' So the South must defend slavery. Yet one part of the North branded that Southern institution as a sin; another called it a crime; a third denounced it as 'a blot and a stain' on our national character — and all, in different ways, proposed the annihilation of it.

Calhoun then gave a history of the abolition crusade, its dominance of both political parties in the North, its successful demand for State laws 'which in effect abrogated the provision of the Constitution that provides for the delivery up of fugitive slaves,' its insistence that slavery should be abolished in all places where Congress had exclusive power of legislation; and finally, the movement which had come to a head in Congress to exclude the Southern States from all territories acquired, and to admit none but free States into the Union.

This speedy progress of abolitionism showed that unless 'something decisive' was done, the black race in the South would presently be emancipated. So the South would 'be forced to choose between abolition and secession.' Indeed, the Union could be dissolved without secession. Agitation could do that fell work, not by a single blow to be sure, since 'the cords which bind these States together in one common Union are far too numerous and powerful for that.' Although it would take a long time to break them all, those cords could be 'snapped,' one after the other, 'until the whole fabric falls asunder.' Already some of the most important had been severed and the others weakened. The slavery agitation had wrought that mischief. Calhoun laid much emphasis on the 'cords' which bound the Union, an idea and expression which a decade later Lincoln was to employ to preserve it.

The strongest spiritual bond of unity had been the national solidarity of the churches. The organization of Protestant denominations was upon the same principle as that of our political

institutions; and they were national in extent. The 'ties which held each denomination together formed a strong cord to hold the whole Union together.' Yet the slavery conflict had 'snapped' even that powerful cord — two sections of the Methodist Church instead of one, the same split in the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church dividing. Of all Protestant denominations, only the Episcopal Church remained intact.

The great political parties, too, which, in some form, had existed since the foundation of the Government, had covered the whole country, and helped mightily to hold the Union together — that cord was now parting. Soon every remaining bond would be sundered by the 'explosive tendency' of the slavery agitation. Where, then, would be the Union? 'But surely that can, with no propriety of language, be called a Union,' when the weaker is held to the stronger by '*force*.' That would be more like subjugation than Union.

How could a real, a genuine Union be saved? Only by removing the cause of Southern discontent. Eulogies on the Union could not save it. Nor could invocation on the name of Washington, 'that illustrious Southerner, whose mortal remains repose on the western bank of the Potomac. He was one of us — a slaveholder and a planter.' Washington's fame was due to 'repelling wrong,' not to submission to insult and aggression. 'I trust that, in this respect, we have profited by his example,' cried Mason from Calhoun's manuscript.

'The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer but the Constitution.' Let the North concede to the South an equal right in acquired territory, faithfully fulfil the Constitutional stipulation concerning fugitive slaves, 'cease the agitation of the slave question' — let the North discharge these duties and agree to one thing more and the Union would be saved. That additional requisite was Northern concurrence in a Constitutional amendment restoring and preserving the original equilibrium between the sections.

If Representatives of the North 'can not agree to settle the questions at issue on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the States we both represent agree to separate and

part in peace.' If the North would not permit amicable separation, 'tell us so, and we shall know what to do' when the question was reduced to 'submission or resistance.' [1]

This was too much for Southern Senators who hoped for adjustment. Next morning, Foote repudiated Calhoun's demand for a constitutional amendment. It had not come from the South, he said; Calhoun had not 'consulted' his colleagues. The very consideration of such a project as a constitutional amendment would cause so much delay as to 'make *disunion almost inevitable*.' The South required no such 'modification of the Federal compact;' all she asked was that that compact be observed.

'*I am for the Constitution and its guaranties*,' Foote exclaimed. 'I am for the Union, as provided for and delineated in that sacred instrument.' He was contending for the 'good old Union, the fruit of the sage counsels of our immortal ancestors.'

Calhoun was irritated. Did Foote accuse him of disunion? Did he mean to insinuate that? asked the sick and aged Southern leader.

A sharp exchange ensued: 'As things now stand, the southern States cannot with safety remain in the Union,' Calhoun insisted.

'I think she may,' responded Foote, 'without any previous amendment of the Constitution.'

'No,' said Calhoun, 'every portion of the North entertains feelings more or less hostile to the South.'

'I cannot think so,' Foote replied.[2]

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 451–5. Also *Works*, IV, 542–73. *New Orleans Picayune*, March 11, 1850.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 461–4. Italics Foote's. For newspaper account, see *Alexandria Gazette*, March 13, 1850.

The antagonism between those Southern members of Congress who were anxious for adjustment, and those who insisted on immediate secession unless every Southern demand was granted, grew so heated that personal fights were often narrowly averted, and sometimes did take place. For instance, on the street Foote denounced Senator Solon Borland of Arkansas as a 'miserable tool of Calhoun's;' Borland struck Foote and they fought until separated. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 16, 1850.

The affray between Foote and Benton in the Senate, March 26, 1850, in which, after the harshest possible exchange of personalities, Benton advanced upon Foote who drew a pistol, was over the question as to whether Douglas's bills for territorial government should have precedence of that granting statehood to California; but the temper displayed was general in both Houses during the first several weeks of the debate. See

Southern correspondents at the capital wrote that Calhoun's influence was destroyed. 'His own colleagues deserted him. . . . The South, however aggrieved, or however alarmed, does not agree with him. . . . The Senators from the South have fully discarded the idea [secession if no amendment to the Constitution]. . . . They will continue to strive for protection to their rights and will redress their grievances under and within the Constitution.' [1]

The very next day after the altercation between Foote and Calhoun, the Legislature of Mississippi adopted a resolution supporting the Southern Convention at Nashville, and providing for the election of delegates. The North, inspired by 'an unholy lust for power and the fell spirit of fanaticism,' was determined to wrest from the South her constitutional rights, Mississippi declared, and to destroy her 'peculiarly domestic relations. . . . Abolish slavery and you convert the fair and blooming fields of the South into barren heaths; their high-souled and chivalrous proprietors into abject dependants — and the *now* happy and contented slaves into squalid and degraded objects of misery and wretchedness.' Mississippi would 'stand by and sustain' her sister States in the South in any course they might adopt at Nashville.[2]

While the spirit of moderation had begun to manifest itself, however feebly, in Washington, and while Union sentiment was even then being expressed among Southern Whigs, the general current of talk at the capital and throughout the South was still for disunion, if Congress should further impair 'Southern rights.' During eight weeks of debate, charges, accusations, and defiances had been hurled by Northern and Southern members of the House and Senate; and, in spite of conciliatory counsels,

Alexandria Gazette, March 28, 1850. Southern papers, generally, condemned the affray between Foote and Benton. *New Orleans Picayune*, April 22, May 6, 1850. For altercations in the House between Northern and Southern Representatives, see Poore, I, 360–2.

[1] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune* in issue of March 11, 1850. 'The Southern members have unanimously rejected it' [Calhoun's proposal of a constitutional amendment]. The National Democratic organ also condemned Calhoun's idea. *Washington Union*, March 6, 1850.

[2] Mississippi Resolutions, March 6, 1850. *State Documents on Federal Relations:* Herman V. Ames, VI, 14–18. Italics in resolution.

as the stormy winter drew to an end the prospect for any amicable adjustment was black and forbidding. 'Many men, who have long entertained hopes of compromise, begin to despair.' [1] 'To what a fatal abyss and by what frantic excesses do madmen seem bent on hurrying this nation!' exclaimed the *New Orleans Picayune* in a long and earnest editorial for the Union, entitled 'THE UNION — IT MUST BE PRESERVED.' [2]

Many days were to elapse before the declaration of Mississippi appeared in the newspapers at Washington, but it was well known that she would take the ground to which, notwithstanding occasional Whig protests, the whole South was hastening at that very time. Resolutions already passed by Georgia were typical of others adopted by Southern States. If Congress should adopt the Wilmot proviso, or admit California as a free State, or abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, or defeat an effective Fugitive Slave Law; or if 'the non-slaveholding States' continued to refuse to surrender runaway slaves, Georgia must 'immediately' take measures for redress.[3] Massachusetts and other Northern States had made exactly opposite demands, and anti-slavery and anti-Southern resolutions were before other Northern legislatures then in session and seething with excitement.[4]

The state of public feeling after Congress had been in session for some months was stated at the time by the editor of Taylor's administration organ, the *Washington Republic*. 'It is scarcely necessary to do more,' he wrote, 'than allude to the excitement which has made the country a spectacle of wonder to many of those even who contributed to its fury. It invaded every avenue

[1] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, Feb. 19, in issue of March 4, 1850.

[2] Yet the *Picayune* was staunchly Southern. 'What the South asks for is to be let alone;' but in spite of the Constitution and in spite of the preference of the people of the Pacific Coast and other Mexican acquisitions, in disregard of their own arguments, Northern men continued to act toward the South in a manner 'intolerably offensive and insulting.' Still, there must be no attempt to dissolve the Union; if there was, 'all good men and patriots will rally, without distinction of class or party, and with enthusiastic promptness to the support of the President,' who had 'announced . . . his resolution to employ all the means in his power to preserve the Union against violence.'

[3] Georgia Resolutions, Feb. 8, 1850. Ames, VI, 19–21.

[4] For a list of Northern and Southern resolutions, with typical examples, see Ames, 253–63.

of life, reached every bosom, and penetrated every sanctuary. The common vocations of men were affected by it; the closest friendships were threatened by it; it alarmed some, enraged others, but startled all. . . . The saloon, the vestry, the tea-table, the thoroughfare, were alike occupied by debating clubs, busy with the universal theme. . . . The halls of either House exhibited a continuous scene of confusion and passionate contention. The galleries and lobbies were daily thronged with anxious multitudes.' [1] For several weeks the opinion of Washington correspondents of Unionist papers had been that no adjustment was possible.

Such was the situation when on March 7, 1850, Webster made his appeal for the Union. 'All hopes rest on Mr. Webster,' wrote an uncommonly careful and well-posted Washington correspondent.[2] Early in the morning the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate went to the house of the sick, old statesman and told him that the Senate Chamber was already crowded. When Senators arrived, they found that, for hours, their seats had been occupied by women, while members of the House and distinguished men from all over the country filled the aisles. Foreign ministers were present, alertly attentive.[3] The galleries were packed, the corridors and every approach to the Senate room densely crowded by throngs struggling to get within the sound of Webster's voice.[4] Never in our history had so many people tried to hear a speech in Congress. The multitude surpassed even that which gathered in the Capitol when Clay spoke. Foote sarcastically moved that the ladies be 'permitted' to remain in the Senatorial chairs they had taken.[5] They did remain and formed 'a brilliant array.' [6]

Webster was in his sixty-ninth year and, for some time, had been sustaining his failing strength by taking a powerful drug

[1] Editorial in the *Republic*, clipped in the *Alexandria Gazette*, March 15, 1850.

[2] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, Feb. 19, in issue of March 4, 1850.

[3] *New Orleans Picayune*, March 18, 1850.

[4] *Reminiscences of Daniel Webster:* Peter Harvey, 219–20.

[5] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 476.

[6] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, March 8, in issue of March 18, 1850.

prescribed by his physician.[1] For several weeks he had slept but four hours each night.[2] Throughout the heated debate he had uttered scarcely a word, listening in silence, his features immovable but troubled, his great dark eyes growing ever more sombre, his still but gloomy attitude ever more determined. And now the time had come for him to speak. It was to be the last of Webster's historic deliverances, and it was to end all hope, if any remained, of his political advancement. Webster knew the storm which the plea he was about to deliver would bring down upon him. 'I have my doubts that the speech I am going to make will ruin me,' he had told a colleague that morning.[3]

Breathless silence fell when Webster arose.[4] For a moment he stood, every eye focussed upon him, every ear strained to catch the first note of that composed but sonorous voice. 'Mr. President,' he began, 'I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American. . . . I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. "Hear me for my cause."' How fortunate that there was a Senate of the United States, he said, 'a body to which the country looks with confidence, for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing counsels.'

Webster had spoken but a short time when a tall, gaunt figure, a long black cloak gathered about him, tottered into the

[1] 'Webster was living from day to day under the influence of oxide of arsenic and other preparations prescribed by his physician.' Channing, VI, 78.

[2] 'I have had little sleep, not four hours a night, on an average for the whole six months.' Webster to Peter Harvey, Sept. 10, 1850. *Private Correspondence*, II, 385.

[3] Poore, I, 365, quoting Theodore Parker. Also Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, March 8, in issue of March 18, 1850. 'Not a single conservative speech . . . has yet been made in the House of Representatives by any Northern man, nor was Mr. Webster sure of any support there from Eastern men. It is not to be disputed that Mr. Webster . . . runs counter to the whole current of public feeling in his own region of country, to the expressed opinion of the State which he represents, and the all but unanimous sentiment of his party friends.

'The very rumor of his purpose, before it had either a shape or a voice, brought forth reproachful sneers, and threats, not muttered low, but loud and distinct, of immediate political destruction. Of this he cannot be unapprised.'

Soon after his speech was published, Webster wrote to George Ticknor: 'My poor speech is launched forth. . . . If its fate should be to go to the bottom, it has no cargo of value and only one passenger to be drowned.' Webster to Ticknor, March 17, 1850. *Private Correspondence*, II, 358–9.

[4] Webster spoke as soon as the Senate was called to order. His speech consumed more than three hours. *Washington Union*, March 8, 1850.

Chamber and was helped to his chair by a fellow Senator. John C. Calhoun had risen from his death-bed to come to the Senate and hear his ancient friend and colleague, albeit his antagonist. When he had listened to Webster's last word, he uttered with unexpected spirit a few sentences in answer, and went home to die.[1] Between Webster and Calhoun there was a mingled admiration, respect, and affection which conflict of ideas never impaired.

Soon Webster reached the subject of slavery. He conceded that it always had existed — it had prevailed among the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans. The 'Gospel of Jesus Christ' did not condemn it. So stood the record of the ages; but now two sections of the American Nation held opposite views. The Southern people had been accustomed all their lives 'to this relation between the two races,' had been taught from their birth to treat slaves 'with care and kindness' and, 'in general,' had done so. 'There are thousands of religious men, with consciences as tender as any of their brethren at the North, who do not see the unlawfulness of slavery,' said Webster. Southern supporters of the institution were 'just as conscientious' as the Northern opponents of it.

The split in the Methodist Church, 'one of the great props of religion and morals, throughout the whole country,' was deplorable. There had been no 'real ground for that separation,' Webster asserted. It had been caused by emotional persons, inflamed by religious 'convictions,' to whom everything was 'absolutely wrong, or absolutely right.' Such men were utterly intolerant of the opinions or feelings of other people. 'They deal with morals as with mathematics, and they think what is right, may be distinguished from what is wrong with the precision of an algebraic equation.'

Webster traced the history of slavery in the Constitution. At the time that ordinance of our national life was adopted, slavery was not considered to be 'inhuman and cruel,' although most public men, especially those of the South, then regarded slavery as 'a "blight," . . . a "scourge," and a "curse."' But it

[1] Calhoun died at Hill's boarding house, March 31, 1850. Clay and Webster were two of the pallbearers at his funeral. *Washington Union*, April 3, 1850.

existed and the question was how to get rid of it. The makers of the Constitution thought that slavery would expire if no more slaves were brought from Africa. So they resolved to prohibit the slave trade. When? Northern members of the Convention proposed twenty years. Many Southern members, Madison especially, declared that twenty years were too long. But the period was not shortened and the slave trade was authorized until 1808.

'The Convention meant to leave slavery, in the States, as they found it, entirely under the authority and control of the States' themselves. That was an undeniable fact of history. A change, however, had taken place North and South, in the opinions of those sections as to slavery; the North had grown warmer against it, the South warmer for it. This divergence of views was the result of interest. 'All that has happened has been natural.'

The Southern idea that slavery was a 'blessing' had grown up in the vast 'COTTON plantations,' which had so suddenly developed and rapidly extended. The roots of Southern championship of slavery were economic — 'it was the COTTON interest that gave a new desire to promote slavery, to spread it and to use its labor.' [1] Thus 'their whole interests became connected . . . with the extension of slavery.' Look at our exports. At first cotton was negligible, but soon 'the age of cotton became the golden age of our Southern brethren.' Then followed the desire to extend cotton territory, the cultivation of which required slave labor. That, said Webster, was the origin of the South's devotion to slavery.

He recounted the expansion of the United States, the effect of which had been to add to the Republic immense domains, out of which slave States had been carved. But, said he, turning to the anti-slavery radicals, 'The law of nature, of physical geography, the law of the formation of the earth' forever excluded slavery from all the territory acquired from Mexico. So why prohibit it by act of Congress? Why 're-enact the will of God?' Why needlessly taunt the South? Webster would not, he declared, put into any bill for territorial governments any

[1] Capitals Webster's.

assertion of 'superior power, exercised for no purpose but to wound the pride . . . of the citizens of the Southern States. . . . They would think it an indignity,' a wanton denial of 'equality of privilege . . . derogatory to their character and their rights.' Why antagonize needlessly?

Webster conceded that the South had a genuine grievance against the North for its conduct toward fugitive slaves. 'In that respect the South . . . is right, and the North is wrong,' he declared. The article in the Constitution which required the delivery of runaway slaves was 'as binding in honor and conscience as any other article.' Members of State legislatures took the oath to support the National Constitution. 'What right have they, in their legislative capacity, or any other capacity, to endeavor to get round this Constitution? . . . None at all; none at all.'

The Supreme Court decided [1] that it was for Congress to see that 'these fugitives' were surrendered; and Webster would therefore support 'to the fullest extent' the Fugitive Slave Bill introduced by Senator Mason of Virginia. 'I say that the South has been injured in this respect, and has a right to complain,' Webster repeated.

What has been the result of the abolition agitation? 'The bonds of the slaves were bound more firmly,' and Southern sentiment hardened. See the change in Southern opinion between the time of the emancipation debates in the Legislature of Virginia of 1832 and the present day. On the other hand, consider the anti-slavery sentiment in the North. Every extreme or untactful thing said in the South was spread broadcast in the North. For instance, the assertion so often made — and made recently in the Senate itself — that the slaves were better off than the laboring people in the North, was resented by them; and that meant the entire section. 'Why, who are the laboring people of the North? They are the whole North,' said Webster. 'Five-sixths of the whole property of the North is in the hands of the laborers of the North.'

The South had given the North other causes of resentment, and the process of mutual recrimination had gone on until feel-

[1] The Prigg case, p. 67, *supra*.

ing had become acute, even dangerous. But secession was no remedy. Webster had heard the word 'with distress and anguish' especially when uttered by those [1] famed throughout the country and the world for their 'patriotic services.' Surely the purpose of the coming Nashville Convention must be to 'adopt conciliatory counsels;' if not, a bad place had been chosen for that gathering. What! Plot 'the overthrow of this Union over the bones of Andrew Jackson!'

As Webster proceeded, wrote the editor of the *Washington Republic*, 'fears . . . for the Union melted . . . and with them dwindled the consequence . . . of those who disturb the repose of society by brandishing firebrands near the altar of the temple. . . . The pedlers in damaged humbugs were trodden down without impeding his course. . . . One could scarcely know that in upholding the Union, in speaking for his country, her banners, her glory, her history, the happiness of her people, and the safety of her generations, he strewed the wayside with the bones of small dabblers, and big ones, too, in agitation, and little fomenters of village treason.' [2]

With his peculiar and distinctive impressiveness of manner, and majesty of bearing, Webster swept on. 'Secession! Peaceable secession!' he exclaimed. 'Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! . . . There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. No, Sir! No, Sir! I see as plainly as I see the sun in heaven what that disruption . . . must produce; I see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe, *in its two-fold character*.[3]

'Peaceable secession! Peaceable secession! . . . What would be the result? What is to remain American? . . . What am I to be? An American no longer? . . . Where is the flag of the republic to remain?' Northern States under one government

[1] Calhoun.

[2] Editorial in the *Republic*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 15, 1850.

[3] Italics Webster's. This was a reference to the expectation of Abolitionists and other ardent anti-slavery persons, that the slaves would rise against the whites in the South, so that the Southern people would have to fight Northern armies and also face the insurrection of millions of negroes.

and Southern States under another government! A Southern Confederacy! 'I am sorry, sir, that it has ever been thought of, talked of, or dreamed of, in the wildest flights of human imagination.'

We cannot break up the Union if we would. Natural causes, social and domestic ties, bind the States together indissolubly. 'Ere long the strength of America will be in the valley of the Mississippi.' Can that river be cut 'in two,' slave States from its mouth upward and free States from its source downward, 'each forming a separate government? . . . I would rather hear of natural blasts and mildews, war, pestilence, and famine, than to hear gentlemen talk of secession. . . . No, Sir! no, Sir! There will be no secession! Gentlemen are not serious when they talk of secession.'

Webster declared that he had no opinion as to how slavery could be extinguished; but 'if any gentleman from the South shall propose a scheme, to be carried on by this government upon a large scale, for the transportation of free colored people to any colony or any place in the world,' Webster vowed that he would 'incur almost any degree of expense to accomplish that object.' [1]

Slowly Calhoun rose and, with unforeseen strength and surprising resonance of voice, spoke briefly in reply.[2] The burden of his remarks was 'broken faith.' When Texas came into the Union, 'what man . . . doubted that the Missouri compromise line would be adopted, and that the territory would fall entirely to the South?' The Missouri Compromise 'was carried mainly by northern votes, although now disavowed' by them, he asserted, without denial then or thereafter during that long and heated debate.

A stronger Fugitive Slave Law would be useless, because it was 'impossible to execute any law of Congress, until the people of the States shall coöperate.' Let Nature determine the destiny of the newly acquired territory. 'Leave that portion of the country more natural to a non-slaveholding population, to be filled by that description of population; and leave that portion

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 269–76; *Writings*, X. 57–98

[2] *Washington Union*, March 8, 1850.

into which slavery would naturally go, to be filled by a slave-holding population — destroying artificial lines.' Let all American citizens enter freely and on equal terms.

No man would be so happy as he, if he could believe that 'this Union, formed by our ancestors, should live forever.' In his service 'of *forty* years,' he had done nothing to weaken it, insisted Calhoun, for he had 'done full justice to all sections.' But Webster was mistaken in thinking that the Union could not be dissolved. Could 'no degree of oppression, no outrage, no broken faith, . . . produce the destruction of this Union? Why, sir, if that becomes a fixed fact, it will itself become the great instrument of producing oppression, outrage, and broken faith. No, sir! the Union can be broken. Great moral causes will break it, if they go on; and it can only be preserved by justice, good faith, and a rigid adherence to the Constitution.' [1]

As the debate went forward, Webster took the floor now and then, to advance the compromise. Again and again he drove home the point that prohibitive legislation was academic, because slavery was excluded from the territories by climate, soil, the law of nature — '*this is the foundation* of all.' [2] Webster said he would vote for a proposal that when the people of the territories should apply for statehood, they could declare for or against slavery as they pleased.

'Sir, my object is peace. My object is reconciliation. . . . I am against agitators, North and South. I am against local ideas, North and South. . . . I know no locality in America. . . . I shall pursue such a course as shall promote the good, and the harmony, and the union of the whole country. This I shall do, God willing, to the end of the chapter.' [3]

Toward the close of the debate, Webster spoke for the last time, quieting animosities, rebuking sectionalism. Whence came the spirit of strife? The South had been aroused by fear of the Wilmot proviso — but that was out of the way. In the North, abolitionism had created hostility — but that harsh spirit was

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 483–4.

[2] Italics author's. Webster made the exclusion of slavery from the territories by natural law the basis of his argument on that subject and repeated the statement frequently in his speeches during the debate.

[3] *Writings*, X, 113–7 (June 17, 1850).

losing its spell. For years, however, the abolition clamor had been continuous and terrible. 'No drum-head, in the longest day's march, was ever more incessantly beaten and smitten, than public sentiment in the North has been, every month, and day, and hour, by the din, and roll, and rub-a-dub of Abolition writers and Abolition lecturers. That it is which has created the prejudice.' [1]

Restitution of runaway slaves had been the practice among the colonies and States for two hundred years, and without complaint until the abolition crusade began. Webster exhibited a letter from Governor Berkeley of Virginia to Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts, written in 1644, asking the return of fugitive slaves. Why this uproar against the practice as if it were something new?

Public business had well-nigh come to a standstill because of dissensions over slavery, said Webster. 'We are hardly able to keep the government alive. All is paralysis.' The Nation had come through other and graver crises — 'can we not stand through this? . . . The question is, whether we have the true patriotism, the Americanism, necessary to carry us through such a trial.

'Sir, I shall stand by the Union, and by all who stand by it. . . . I mean to stand upon the Constitution. . . . I shall know but one country. . . . I was born an American; I will live an American; I shall die an American; . . . What are personal consequences? . . . No man can suffer too much, and no man can fall too soon, if he suffer or if he fall in defence of the liberties and Constitution of his country.'

These were the last words ever spoken by Daniel Webster in the Senate of the United States. Soon thereafter he left that forum forever, and became, for the second time, Secretary of State.[2] While acting as head of the Cabinet, he died; but not, as we shall see, until he had appealed to the country, again and again, for the Constitution and the Union.

Four days after the Seventh of March Speech, William H.

[1] *Writings*, x, 165 (July 17, 1850).

[2] Appointed by President Fillmore, Webster took his oath of office July 23. Webster to his son, July 23, 1850. *Private Correspondence*, II, 379.

Seward of New York, the leading opponent of slavery who still remained within the Whig Party, took the floor. He was of medium height, had a 'noble forehead, light grey hair, penetrating eyes, pointed New English features, in which shrewdness and benevolence are blended.' His clothes were 'elegant,' his manners 'easy,' and he impressed foreign observers as a man who was 'at home in the drawing-room as well as in the Senate.' [1] Such was the appearance of the man who, on March 11, 1850, rose in the Senate to give voice to advanced Northern sentiment on the question of the hour. He saw clearly that the Whigs were going to pieces and that a new party must be formed to meet the issue that had arisen; and many, especially the newspaper correspondents, believed that the epochal speech which he delivered was designed as a rallying cry for such a political organization and as its platform.[2] Seward had 'the instinct of the future.' [3]

He was forty-nine years old when he made the historic speech which we are now briefly to review. He had been Governor of New York, was a successful lawyer and a bold, astute, and resourceful political manager. Singularly calm and suave in manner, he had endured with smiling indifference the taunts to which he had been subjected from the moment he had entered the Senate as a member of that body. As yet he was not well-liked by other Senators [4] and had no reputation in Washington for eloquence, statesmanship, or any other attractive popular quality. He was known at the capital only as a new man who represented radical Northern opinion. So when he rose to speak, the galleries were almost deserted and but few Senators were in their places. There was 'no one to approve and none to admire,' sneered the *Washington Union*.[5]

Seward read his speech from manuscript. He argued at length for the admission of California: let the Senate beware how they flouted her, for she might set up an independent government of her own. Oregon would go with her and the whole Pacific Coast be lost to the United States. Under the circumstances, Seward

[1] Pulszky, I, 173. [2] Poore, I, 362. [3] Pulszky, I, 174.

[4] Seward had been excluded from membership of any Committee of the Senate.

[5] March 19, 1850.

asserted, he would have voted to admit California even as a slave State. But to admit her only as an item of Clay's compromise was preposterous. Seward never would agree to such adjustment. What did this so-called 'compromise' amount to? — the surrender of 'some portion of human rights in one region, for liberty in another region.'

Calhoun's proposal that equilibrium between the North and South should be restored and preserved was vain and impracticable; it 'would be lost again, and lost more rapidly than it was before.' See the great flood of migration to the free States: it formed 'continuous, unbroken, streaming processions of colonists, founders of States, builders of nations,' and all of them for freedom.

How futile to enact a stronger law for the recovery of escaping slaves! It could not possibly be enforced. The fugitive slave clause of the Constitution was no more than a compact 'which rests for its execution on the States.' Yet the slave interests had 'induced' Congress to enact the existing Fugitive Slave Law (Act of 1793) and the Supreme Court had decided that Congress had exclusive power over the subject. 'We deem the principle of the law for the recapture of fugitives [as thus expounded] . . . unjust, unconstitutional, and immoral.' Seward boldly attacked the decision of the Supreme Court in the celebrated Prigg case. Patriotism refused its sanction while 'the consciences of our people condemn it.' Indeed, the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution was, itself, invalid, because it was against the law of nations and the law of nature. That wicked provision was not binding on righteous men and women. 'We cannot . . . be either true Christians or real freemen, if we impose on another a chain that we defy all human power to fasten on ourselves.' Let the South be its own policeman — the North would not be so made use of.

Seward never would agree to continue slavery in the District of Columbia, he said, but would vote to abolish it and to spend any amount of money for that purpose. 'And if I shall be asked, what I did to embellish the capital of my country, I will point to her freedmen, and say, these are the monuments of my munificence!' he modestly admitted.

Even if the Constitution recognized slavery, such recognition would be void because in violation of natural law; but, ignoring inconsistency, he declared, the Constitution did no such thing. The word slave was not in that instrument. Moreover the Constitution was not a mere agreement between States, but the fundamental law of the people of the United States — except the fugitive slave provision which was only a 'compact' among the States. The Constitution contemplated no sectional divisions — that idea was 'purely imaginary . . . a mere conceit.' The United States was not 'a joint stock association, or a copartnership,' but 'a political state, . . . whose end is government, for the security, welfare, and happiness, of all who live under its protection.'

Suppose that our vast public domain had been secured by the mutual efforts of the whole Nation and was common property of the Nation? That fact gave the Government no arbitrary power over it. The Constitution only regulated 'our stewardship' devoting the domain 'to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare, and to liberty.'

And, cried Seward, his serene voice no longer calm, but vibrant with restrained emotion, '*there is a higher law than the Constitution*,[1] . . . which devotes it [the public territory] to the same noble purposes.'

There could be no disunion by means of secession; only revolution could accomplish that disaster. And 'I discover no omens of revolution.' What he did see, he said, was the breaking up of political parties because 'a moral question, transcending the too narrow creeds of parties, has arisen.'

What was the nature of the American Government? It was 'a democracy of property and persons . . . operating by means of universal suffrage.' Nature, itself, bound North and South together, indissolubly. 'The Union, then, is, not because merely that men choose that it shall be, but because some Government must exist here, and no other Government than this can.' Divided allegiance! One loyalty to a State and another loyalty to the Nation! 'I know only one country and one sover-

[1] Italics author's. This phrase became the point of attack by most lawyers and all conservatives, as well as by those who favored slavery.

eign — the United States of America and the American people.' [1]

During his Seventh of March Speech, Webster had attacked the Northern Democracy for having supported the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War 'under pledges to the slave interest.' This aroused Douglas, who now spoke for his party. Seward had also taunted the Democratic Party, but so great was Douglas's contempt for the new Senator from New York, that he ignored Seward altogether. Although only thirty-seven years of age, Douglas had now become the Democratic leader in the North and had a personal following throughout the country larger and more ardent than any other Democrat. He was recognized, moreover, as the strongest of all the younger Senators and was especially well-liked and admired by Webster and Clay. While Lincoln read every word spoken in the great debate of 1850, he studied no speech, not even that of Webster, with greater care than that of Douglas.[2]

So far from the support of Texan annexation by the Northern Democracy having been given for the benefit of the slave power, the reverse was the truth, Douglas said. His party had rejected Tyler's scheme, and, unburdened of that 'incubus,' had then annexed Texas 'upon broad national grounds, elevated far above, and totally disconnected from, the question of slavery . . . the extension of territory, of commerce, of navigation, of political power, of national security, and glory . . . without especial reference to any particular section.'

Webster interrupted Douglas with a playful remark about 'northwestern Democracy.' Douglas thanked him. 'There is a power in this nation greater than either the North or the South — a growing, increasing, swelling power, that will be able to speak the law to this nation, and to execute the law as spoken,' he thundered. 'That power is the country known as the great West — the Valley of the Mississippi, one and indi-

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 260–9; *Works of William H. Seward*, edited by George E. Baker, I, 51–93.

[2] Douglas's speech was published in three sections by the *Illinois State Register*, May 9, 16, and 23, 1850. It was also published in full in the *National Intelligencer*, as well as in the *Congressional Globe*, and extensive extracts were printed in all Chicago, St. Louis, and Louisville papers.

visible from the gulf to the great lakes. . . . There, sir, is the hope of this nation — the resting-place of the power that is not only to control, but to save, the Union.' [1]

Time and again Douglas advanced the idea of popular sovereignty. The people of a Territory when applying for statehood, could declare for or against slavery, he said. Only the application of that fundamental principle of self-government, together with the operation of the laws of nature — soil and climate — could settle the question. As we have seen, Clay and Webster had said the same thing — indeed, Webster had declared it to be 'the foundation of all.'

Douglas gave a succinct history of the Wilmot proviso. Winthrop of Massachusetts had proposed the same thing as to Oregon 'one year before Mr. Wilmot's voice was ever heard in the halls of Congress.' Then Wilmot offered it as an amendment to a bill appropriating money to enable President Polk to negotiate a treaty of peace with Mexico. So the Wilmot proviso was 'a nondescript, the like of which had never been seen, or heard of, in the political history of this country.'

Consider what that absurd, that revolutionary measure really was, said Douglas — an attempt by a majority vote in the House to control the treaty-making power which the Constitution placed exclusively in the hands of the President, with the concurrence of two-thirds of the Senate. Worse still, the Wilmot proviso 'proposed to deprive the people of the territory, even when they should become a State, of the right of moulding and forming their domestic institutions to suit themselves, and to make them the subject of negotiation and treaty stipulation with a foreign Power.'

So the Wilmot proviso was an attempt to violate the Constitution and overthrow a fundamental principle of free government — a great statement of a great truth. Thank God, it was dead 'without the hope of resurrection,' exclaimed Douglas.

[1] For nearly two decades before Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency, the Middle West profoundly impressed all foreign travellers as well as all American politicians. Writing in 1852, Madame Pulszky said the Middle West was then the 'home of Sunday-schools, the terrestrial paradise of the oppressed German and Irish peasant, the land of independent small farmers; it is the most democratic and equal society on earth.' Pulszky, I, 122.

The purpose of designing men had been to form a third party about the Wilmot proviso; but that object had been defeated by the treaty of peace without that disturbing proposal. Yet Southern politicians still used the name in order to get the legislatures of their States to pass foolish resolutions pledging resistance if the obnoxious proviso ever should be adopted hereafter.

Douglas differed *in toto* from Calhoun's idea that 'the South was deprived of its due share of the territories.' Neither the South nor the North had any share in them. 'The territories belong to the United States as one people, one nation, and are to be disposed of for the common benefit of all.' It was no violation of 'southern rights to prohibit slavery [from the territories], nor of northern rights to leave the people to decide the question for themselves.'

The 'substance' of the Missouri Compromise, Douglas insisted, was that 'west of Missouri and Arkansas, slavery should be prohibited north of 36° 30′.' But why all this pother? Natural causes had excluded slavery more effectually than any Act of Congress could prohibit it. The Missouri Compromise had no practical bearing on slavery — 'it neither curtailed nor extended it one inch.' It had done the South no harm, the North no good; it had merely allayed, temporarily, the excitement that was alienating sections of the Union. That was all the Missouri Compromise had done — all it amounted to.

Of course citizens of any State could go to the Territories and take with them their property, subject, however, to the laws in force there. For instance, banks were property in most States, but some States and Territories excluded them; the banker could not take his bank to Minnesota, Oregon, or California, for example. Whisky was property in nearly all the States; yet it could not be taken into Oregon because prohibited by territorial law, nor into the Indian Country because national law forbade it. It was the same with slave property — the owners could take it wherever local law did not exclude it.

Thus in 1850 Douglas announced the truth that friendly legislation and local favor were indispensable to the existence of slavery in a Territory or anywhere else, and made an unanswer-

able argument for that principle. Yet eight years later Lincoln was to ask Douglas whether he favored this very principle, a question which within the last forty years has been made to appear the manifestation of superhuman foresight.

It was not the duty of free States to 'cause' the fulfilment of the fugitive slave provision of the Constitution, as Calhoun and other Southern leaders contended. The Supreme Court had decided that to be the business of Congress.[1] Defects in the existing Fugitive Slave Law should be remedied, of course. But, said Douglas, the complaint of non-enforcement of that statute had been 'greatly exaggerated.' There was little or no trouble about it in Illinois and other border States; but, he exclaimed sarcastically, the 'sufferings' of Vermont . . . and Louisiana, were 'utterly intolerable.'

Why? Because they knew little or nothing of one another and were imposed upon by 'mischievous and unprincipled' persons who led each of these States to utter the 'grossest slanders' of the other. So 'the war rages furiously between these extremes;' neither of which was really injured and each of which was ignorant of actual conditions. It was 'as impossible to get a Carolinian to comprehend and appreciate the character of the people and institutions of the North, as it is for an Abolitionist to understand the true condition of things in the South.'

Calhoun's requirement of a Constitutional Amendment to restore and preserve 'equilibrium' between North and South — an equal number of free and slave States for all time to come — 'would be a moral and physical impossibility.' From the foundation of the Government, said Douglas, 'the cause of freedom has steadily and firmly advanced, while slavery has receded in the same ratio.' All confidently expected that, in time, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and perhaps North Carolina and Tennessee, would provide for gradual emancipation and, ultimately, become entirely free.

Seventeen States would finally be made out of the national territory between the Mississippi and the Pacific, Douglas predicted, and every one of them would be free 'whether Congress shall prohibit slavery or not.' Where could the South find slave

[1] The Prigg Case.

States to balance that accretion to the forces of liberty? How idle, then, to talk of a division of territory between slave States and free!

The truth was, Douglas insisted, that slavery could not possibly exist in any territory whatever that had been acquired from Mexico. So the whole controversy over slavery extension was academic — or was it a series of manœuvres by politicians for partisan purposes? shrewdly asked Douglas. Northern and Southern radicals would strive to keep up the agitation, but their effort would avail nothing. The people would not gratify politicians whose real object was to 'organize parties on geographical lines.' [1]

The next speaker of historical importance and who was to be intimately associated with Lincoln, was a new Senator from Ohio who had entered the Senate at the same time with Seward. He was forty-two years old, tall, symmetrically proportioned, with grave but handsome features and a full, high brow. Of all the eminent antagonists of slavery except outright Abolitionists, Salmon P. Chase had shown himself to be the most earnest and sincere. His uncle, Philander Chase, Bishop of the Episcopal Church, had taken him when a boy from his native New Hampshire, to Ohio, and after graduating from Dartmouth, teaching a classical school in Washington, and making a visit to England, young Chase had opened a law office in Cincinnati.

From the very first, Chase took active and militant part in the anti-slavery movement, and defended so many fugitive slaves that Kentuckians called him 'the attorney-general for runaway negroes.' He was a Democrat, but had helped form the Liberty Party and had supported Birney in 1844 and Van Buren in 1848. The following year he was elected to the Senate by a combination of Free-Soilers and Democrats, a political bargain much like that which sent Sumner to Washington, and for which both men were furiously denounced at the time and for long afterwards. When on March 26, 1850, Chase rose to speak against Clay's compromise, he claimed to be and was accounted an 'independent Democrat.'

He spoke for the greater part of two days, the first section of

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 364–75.

his address being devoted to an exhaustive historical review of the evolution of slavery in the United States. The remainder of his argument was in support of the points made by Seward. He held that the Constitution did not authorize 'the absolute subjection of one man to the disposal of another man as property,' and he boldly denounced Justice Story's opinion in the Prigg case. Regardless of Constitutions and statutes, Chase said, slavery was condemned by 'that law of sublimer origin and more awful sanction than any human code' which enjoined every person 'to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us.' [1]

Few statements ever have been made in a parliamentary body which aroused such general dissent among lawyers, legislators, and the great body of the people, as did Seward's and Chase's announcement of the doctrine of 'a higher law' than written constitutions and regularly enacted statutes. There, Southern writers and publicists cried, was the true voice of lawlessness and social dissolution. How could government function, how could society exist if laws were to be flouted under the guise of some unwritten 'higher law' which any law-breaker could cite in justification of his conduct?

All maniacs made that excuse, said the *Washington Union* — yet this was 'the manifesto of the northern disunionists.' [2] The *Illinois State Register* branded Seward's doctrine as that of a 'time-serving demagogue.' [3] It was an 'audacious effusion of fanaticism,' said the National Democratic organ; but what else could be expected of one who had pandered to every group that could help him in his political ambitions, and who had been and was 'attached to the odds and ends of every movement . . . for the purpose of riding into power' — anti-Mason, anti-renter, and now Abolitionist.[4] The Administration paper repudiated Seward's dogma of a 'higher law;' it 'gives him a scope as unconfined as the winds' and must end in the 'annihilation of all government, all law, all rights.' [5]

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 468–80.
[2] *Washington Union*, March 13, 1850. [3] March 28, 1850.
[4] *Ib.*, March 16, 1850.
[5] *Washington Republic*, clipped in *ib.*, March 16, 1850.

If Seward's principles were those of the North — as they were not — there would indeed be necessity for considering secession, said the ardently Unionist Whig organ, the *Southron*, published at Jackson, Mississippi. Such talk was what kept the spirit of disunion alive in the South.[1] The *New Orleans Picayune*, the most conservative of Southern journals, declared that the Administration has 'cast off' Seward because of his 'fanatical dogma.'[2] To the same effect was the condemnation of Seward's 'higher law' theory by Justice John McLean of the Supreme Court of the United States in his charge to a Grand Jury: 'It is utterly destructive of all law' and 'would overturn the basis of society. We must stand by the [Fugitive Slave] law.'[3]

'A higher law — a divine law — a natural law!' exclaimed Clay with infinite contempt. 'Who are they who venture to tell us what is divine and what is natural law? Where are their credentials of prophecy?' The same 'fanatics' were already promulgating other higher laws, such as division of property and confiscation of lands which the owner could not cultivate. With them 'the parchment from Heaven supersedes the parchment from Government. . . . Wild, reckless, and abominable theories, which strike at the foundations of all property, and threaten to crush in ruins the fabric of civilized society.'[4] Webster's disgust with the dogma of Seward and Chase was even more profound than that of Clay.[5]

On March 25, Senator Robert Mercer Taliaferro Hunter of Virginia, took the floor and made an able, albeit a radical and defiant speech. If a 'sectional majority should govern here, without regard to the limitations of the Constitution . . . would not that minority be bound . . . to dissolve their connection with such a Union, peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must?

[1] *Southron*, March 29, 1850.

[2] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, March 20, in issue of April 1, 1850. Also editorial in *ib.*, March 25, 1850.

[3] *Alexandria Gazette*, Sept. 19, 1850.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 572; *Works*, IX, 446–7.

[5] For example, Webster said in his speech at Capon Springs, Va., June 28, 1851, that 'when nothing else will answer' the anti-slavery opponents of the Constitution, 'they invoke religion and speak of a higher law. Gentlemen, this North Mountain is high, the Blue Ridge higher still; the Alleghany higher than either; and yet this higher law ranges farther than an eagle's flight above the highest peaks of the Alleghany. No common

Could it be treason, in such a case, to take sides with your native State? . . .

'Sir, if Virginia should ever think it her duty to separate from this Confederacy — and may God forever avert the necessity for such a step! — I should not hesitate as to whom my allegiance is due. Should she give the word of command I shall know her voice amid a thousand, and follow wherever she may lead. . . . Higher than the public peace, higher than the Union even, I prize the indispensable rights and liberties of my native State.' [1]

As spring opened, the new Senator from Illinois, General James Shields, delivered his maiden speech. It is worthy of note because of Lincoln's curious dislike of Shields which, as we have seen, had brought the two men to the duelling ground less than ten years before. For the first time we here get a picture of this man with whom, because of his unhappy relations with Lincoln, history has dealt so unkindly. Madame Pulszky, who met and observed Shields in Washington two years after he made the speech to which we are now to listen for a moment, described him thus: 'His physiognomy is very pleasant. Dark hair, dark brown eyes, dark complexion, . . . elegant manners and eloquence . . . acuteness and precision in expression, comprehensive liberal views, unprejudiced research.' [2]

The Legislature of his State had instructed him to support the Wilmot proviso, he began, and he would do so; that was his Constitutional duty and he would discharge it or resign. How

vision can discern it; no conscience, not transcendental and ecstatic, can feel it; the hearing of common men never listens to its high behests; and therefore one should think it is not a safe law to be acted on, in matters of the highest practical moment. It is the code, however, of the fanatical and factious abolitionists of the North.' *Writings*, XIII, 435.

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 382.

Hunter was forty-one years old when he made this much-talked-of speech. He had been elected to various offices almost continuously after his graduation from the University of Virginia and was Speaker of the House in the Twenty-sixth Congress.

He was elected to the Senate in 1847 and served until Virginia seceded, when he withdrew and went with his State. Four months later he was one of the Southern Senators who were expelled for treason.

He became a member of the Confederate Senate and served about six months as Confederate Secretary of State. In 1865 he was one of the Confederate Peace Commissioners who met President Lincoln at Hampton Roads.

[2] Pulszky, I, 175–6.

absurd the Southern position that, although Congress could declare war and annex territory, it could not govern the people of that territory! Shields declared that he was disgusted with mischief-makers, whether in the North or South. 'Sir, I have seen northern men and southern men stand together shoulder to shoulder in many a struggle. I have seen northern and southern blood mingle on many a field. I have seen northern and southern men follow the glorious standard of a common country to common victory, and to many a victory.' He would consider himself a 'criminal' if he tried to 'excite hate . . . between brethren of the same country, having the same glorious history and the same common destiny.' He believed that these very men, now denouncing one another, would 'to-morrow, if necessary, unite in a common struggle, for their common country, against a hostile world' — an idea which Seward tried to induce Lincoln to adopt eleven years later. Yet in Congress, said Shields, invective, vituperation, and almost 'personal collision' were 'ominous indications' of impending disaster, and like signs appeared all over the country.

He had been thrilled, he continued, by Clay's eloquence and statesmanship. 'I forgot . . . that I was a Democrat, and that he was the great leader of the Whig party. . . . I saw nothing but the great Republican, and the great American.' Yet Calhoun's plan for an 'equilibrium' between the sections, struck Shields as 'the mere dream of a political visionary.' The idea of unopposed secession was nonsense. 'The peaceable separation of the States — an amicable destruction of this Government? . . . No, sir; the very attempt would be war . . . continuous, ceaseless, perpetual war. . . . You would devour yourselves. . . . Does any sane man suppose that the great Northwest, with all its millions — that world that is growing up between the headwaters of the Ohio and the headwaters of the Missouri, . . . will ever peaceably submit to see the mouth of the Mississippi River in the possession of a foreign Government? Never, sir, never. . . . The idea is . . . very little short of insanity.'

Even if the South seceded and set up a government of her own, such a 'Southern Confederacy' would be a 'mere colony of masters and slaves to raise cotton for the factories of Eng-

land.' In that situation, slavery itself would presently perish. 'The South might as well attempt to shut out the pressure of the atmosphere, as to shut out the whole pressure of the civilized world on its cherished institutions.'

Not that abolition was possible or desirable at present, Shields believed; the slaves themselves would be 'the principal sufferers by the change.' Moreover, when two distinct races lived in the same community, one superior and the other inferior, 'like the negro and the white race, a state of mild and gentle slavery is the safest and happiest condition for the inferior race.' In any event, the Constitution must be upheld and, therefore, he would vote for a reasonable Fugitive Slave Law.

At the close of Shields's speech, a curious incident, not often witnessed in House or Senate, took place. When he said, 'I will no longer detain the Senate,' the official reporter recorded that 'several Senators' cried, 'Go on as long as you wish.' [1] Webster, Clay, and other leading Senators warmly congratulated Shields on his 'excellent' speech.[2]

In the House, debate was incessant, earnest, and, as we have seen, often fiery. Lincoln read the speeches of some Representatives as attentively as he read those of Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Chase, Seward, or even Douglas; for they were made by men from Illinois, all of whom he knew intimately, and their speeches were published in the Springfield papers as well as in the *Congressional Globe*. One was by Colonel William H. Bissell, who was still a Democrat, but an intense Union man.[3] It was in answer to a speech of Albert Gallatin Brown of Mississippi,[4] who had declared that the South would secede if her rights were further assailed. If slavery was so obnoxious that the North objected to having it in the Union, the South would take it out of the Union, Brown had declared; and surely, said he, the

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. I, 646–50, April 5, 1850.

[2] *Memoirs:* Gustave Koerner, I, 557–8.

[3] Bissell became a Republican soon after the formation of that party.

[4] Brown had just retired as Governor of Mississippi, was immediately elected to the House and, on the expiration of the term of Senator Foote, was elected to succeed him in the Senate. Brown was a Southern 'fire-eater' and was one of those expelled from the Senate for treason, six months after he had left that body when his State withdrew from the Union.

North would not 'seek a battle-field to renew, amid blood and carnage, this loathsome association.'

Bissell replied with tremendous force. Talk of disunion because of what the North had done was 'naked treason,' he shouted. Perhaps 'vicious' or 'deluded' people in the free States had helped the escape of fugitive slaves; but the 'mass of the people' of the North condemned these fanatics. He was for a stronger Fugitive Slave Law. 'We, the representatives of the North, will aid you to preserve your constitutional rights.'

'But, sir, we want to hear no more about disunion.' The people of the great West and Northwest loved the Union so much that, when the threat was made of destroying it, every man of them would swear 'by the Eternal God, as I now do, it shall never be done, if our arms can save it. Illinois proffered to the country nine regiments to aid in the vindication of her rights in the war with Mexico. And should danger threaten the Union from any source, or in any quarter, in the North or in the South, she will be ready to furnish twice, thrice, yes, four times that number, to march where that danger may be, to return when it is passed, or return no more.' [1]

The Representative from Lincoln's District, Thomas L. Harris, who defeated Logan while Lincoln was still in Congress, made a more earnest Union speech, if possible, than that of Bissell. Harris declared that the purposes of the Nashville Convention was 'disunion, and nothing but disunion.' Let secessionists beware! The citizens of Nashville — home of Andrew Jackson — would never permit their city to be made 'the den of a treasonable conclave.'

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 225–8. Illinois supplied four regiments in the Mexican War, but enough more men asked to be taken to make nine full regiments. Bissell's statement that Illinois alone would furnish four times as many to put down secession was regarded by Southern men as a threat of coercion and was published with much effect throughout the South.

During his speech, Bissell denied that the Mississippi regiment saved the day of Buena Vista. Jefferson Davis demanded a retraction. Bissell refused, Davis challenged him, Bissell accepted and 'the parties were preparing for the fight, when General [President] Taylor and Colonel Bliss [Taylor's son-in-law and brother-in-law of Davis] . . . interposed their good offices. They satisfied the hostile parties that each alluded to different points of the battle, and they finally succeeded in effecting a reconciliation.' Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, March 11, 1850. Davis challenged Bissell, Feb. 27, 1850. *Ib.*

There were no sections in the United States, said Harris. 'DISUNION, sir? Gentlemen do not know the meaning of the word they use. DISUNION is the dissolution of all government — the dissolution of society. Dissolution is war — civil, desolating war. . . . There is a necessity which binds us together, as immovable as the mountain's range, and as lasting as the flow of the mighty rivers of the West. Nothing can avoid it — nothing can remove it; time only adds to its strength.' [1]

Even that faithful Democrat and man of moderate speech, William A. Richardson, the chief lieutenant of Douglas, was defiant. Calhoun's idea of amending the Constitution so as to maintain a balance of power between free and slave States was preposterous; if such a device alone could save the Union, its end was near, Richardson asserted. 'Be assured that thirteen millions of people [the North] will never consent that they shall have no more political influence and power than seven millions [the South].' [2]

In a set speech Toombs declared that the Southern people were discontented because they believed that the North had a 'fixed purpose . . . to destroy their political rights;' and to put 'the ban of the empire' on Southern institutions, by excluding the South from 'the common benefits of the Republic.' Why all this cant about slavery? The very salaries of Senators and Representatives were paid in part from the sale of slaves for taxes. 'Gentlemen, . . . this is a pro-slavery Government. Slavery is stamped upon its heart. . . . I demand to-day that protection . . . which we have never withheld from you. It is the price of our allegiance.' The South asked nothing but her Constitutional rights; if those rights were denied, 'it will then be not only the right, but the duty of the slaveholding States to resume the powers which they have conferred upon that Government.' As to the Northern threats: 'Let the aggressor tremble,' shouted Toombs. 'When the argument is exhausted we will stand by our arms.' [3]

The Southern attitude was also explained from a source nearer to Lincoln than even Stephens or Toombs. Kentucky

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. 1, Appendix, 410–4.
[2] *Ib.*, 423–5. April 3, 1850. [3] *Ib.*, 198–201.

was intimately woven into his personal life, and was to be vital in his effort to save the Union. The speeches of two Representatives from that State in the *Congressional Globe*, which, it cannot be repeated too often, Lincoln read with keen and troubled interest, are notable. One of these was made by Colonel Humphrey Marshall, a relative of Chief Justice Marshall.[1] Like Lincoln, he was a Whig and had supported Taylor for the Whig nomination for President.[2]

Abolitionism would not stop with emancipation, he averred, but under the pretext of 'a higher law' than the Constitution, would 'wallow in all the excesses of the vilest agrarianism.' The Southern people had been branded as 'thieves,' 'man-stealers,' 'tyrants,' 'abhorred of God,' and like terms. Was this the language of decency, much less of conciliation and brotherhood? Marshall scorned the threat of armed coercion — the force, which, when Lincoln employed it, turned thousands of Southern men into secessionists and was the decisive influence that made Virginia and North Carolina withdraw from the Union. Force did not create and could not preserve the Union. Kentucky was for 'a Union of equal sovereign States,' with 'equal rights, equal dignity, . . . as well as Constitutional obligation.' When such a Union no longer existed, Kentucky would be ready 'for "honor's toughest task."' [3]

Another speech by a Representative from that State was even more significant. Daniel Breck said that he was born and educated in the North, but he had lived in Kentucky for more than thirty years; [4] so he could speak with impartiality. The Abolitionists were as wild and cruel, he declared, as those who burned witches a hundred years ago. When whites and negroes were numerous and lived in the same place, slavery was best for both races. Negroes were essentially inferior and even if freed would

[1] Marshall was a graduate of West Point, a Colonel of volunteers in the Mexican War and became a Brigadier-General in the Confederate Army.

[2] *Washington Union*, April 7, 1850.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt. I, Appendix, 406–10. April 3, 1850.

[4] Breck was born in Topsfield, Mass., and was a graduate of Dartmouth. He went to Kentucky and was very successful in the law and in finance. He became President of a branch of the State Bank of Kentucky and a Justice of the Supreme Court of that State. Breck was typical of large numbers of men of Northern birth who went South and attained eminence in the professions.

necessarily be a 'degraded *caste*, and virtually slaves,' in the South. Neither force nor so-called law could change the nature of things. No wonder the anti-slavery feeling had grown in the North. 'Lecturing fanatics and vagabonds' had had the field to themselves, and had 'grossly misrepresented' the harsh treatment of the slaves. These irresponsible itinerant agitators had even exhibited 'chains and manacles, and the most horrid instruments for punishment.' It was not to be endured. But Breck deprecated disunion — only fanatics, North and South, thought that desirable. Yet if it must come, although 'the bones of my ancestors sleep beneath the sod of New England, and I have kindred blood in almost every State north of the Potomac,' his first duty was to Kentucky, and he would stand by her in whatever she did, go with her wherever she went.[1]

For the first few weeks of the debate, excitement in the South increased; but, after a while, it began to subside. In March an immense Union meeting was held in Baltimore;[2] while another at Natchez was said to be the greatest assemblage that ever had met in that city;[3] and similar Union meetings were held all over Mississippi.[4] The *St. Louis Republican* called for such gatherings everywhere.[5] From the middle of May discussion in Congress went forward with ever-diminishing animosity. Washington representatives of conservative Southern papers began to denounce the extremists of that section.[6] Webster's argument and appeal were having their effect in Congress and throughout the Nation. A week after the Seventh of March Speech, the correspondent of the *New Orleans Picayune* wrote his paper that the flames were beginning to die.[7]

It was all due to Webster, everybody said. 'He braved the prejudice of the North; he rebuked the intemperance of the South,' wrote the editor of the *Washington Republic*. 'He bared

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXII, Pt I, Appendix, 361–4. March 25, 1850.

[2] *Alexandria Gazette*, March 6, 1850.

[3] *Natchez Weekly Courier*, March 6, 13, 1850.

[4] *Ib.*, March 27, 1850.

[5] Clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 21, 1850.

[6] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, June 9, 17, 1850.

[7] Washington Correspondence, March 13, in issue March 25, 1850. 'Instead of being desponding, ominous, almost despairing, it [public opinion] is now joyous, buoyant, full of hope, almost confident.' *Ib.*, March 25, editorial.

his breast to the assaults of fanaticism, and exposed his name to the malice of faction. But he may well be content to forego the plaudits of madmen and plotters of treason, to receive the homage of a continent of freemen. . . . The slate-pencil politicians, who cypher out the problem of disunion like a sum in tare and tret, were bid to hang their satchels by night-time upon the black hemlock.' Let the delegates to the Nashville Convention subside — 'another cry was heard in the land.' Webster had brought the 'tempest-tossed and billow-beaten bark . . . safe to harbor.' [1] The *Louisville Journal* declared that 'the whole country is ringing with the utmost enthusiastic applause.' [2]

Clay's influence, too, was working in the hearts of men. Passion was cooling, moderation resuming its sway, love of the Union strengthening those cords which Calhoun had believed broken or breaking. Soon after Clay's first speech, letters from 'the most eminent and influential men in New England and New York' insisting on compromise, poured in on Congress.[3]

Democratic as well as Whig papers in the South began sternly to rebuke disunionists. 'It is idle and treasonable to say let us have the Missouri compromise, or we dissolve,' said the *New Orleans Picayune*. 'The Union cannot be dissolved with all the efforts of which the North and South are capable.' [4] Even before the Compromise was under way, the *Natchez Courier* came out with a flaming editorial for the Union, although bitterly condemning Abolitionists as the source of the trouble.[5] The *Southron* declared that if politicians would do one-half as much to close the breach as they had done to widen it, all would soon be harmonious. That paper acclaimed Webster's speech as noble and patriotic, and printed many similar expressions from the Southern press. Yet even that stanch Whig journal gave warning that the Union could not be 'hooped and kept together by *force*.' [6]

At the first rumor that the Nashville Convention might

[1] Editorial in the *Republic*, clipped in the *Alexandria Gazette*, March 15, 1850.

[2] *Louisville Journal*, March 15, 1850.

[3] Washington Correspondence, *Alexandria Gazette*, Feb. 12, 1850.

[4] June 24, 1850.

[5] *Natchez Weekly Courier*, Jan. 9, 1850.

[6] *Southron*, March 8, 22, 1850.

be controlled by secessionists, the *Natchez Courier* savagely rebuked any plan for extreme measures. 'We do not expect to see any such gasconading, empty, meaningless bravado . . . that worthless chivalry which eternally barks but never bites.' [1]

A month before the Convention met, the *Southron* came out boldly against it; that meeting had dwindled to a mere gesture of a single political party.[2] The *Louisville Journal* was of a like mind.[3] Kentucky was decidedly against the project.[4] Much opposition developed in Louisiana, and the Legislature of Tennessee laid on the table a resolution approving secession.[5] Alabama showed hostility to the scheme [6] — one delegate, Colonel T. B. Bethea, declared that he would not attend if the object of the Convention was to unite the Southern people against any legislation Congress might enact.[7] Delegates began to pass through New Orleans to Nashville, but, declared the *Picayune*, there was no longer any expectation that the Convention would be representative of the South.[8]

So when the over-advertised gathering assembled at Nashville in June, no such numbers attended as had been expected in the winter of 1849–50, nor was that intense enthusiasm displayed which had marked the passage of resolutions by Southern Legislatures when responding to the call. Before it convened and during its early sessions, the purpose of the gathering was savagely denounced in and about Nashville itself.[9] In vain did Walter T. Colquitt of Georgia, once a Methodist preacher, urge '*every Southern State to be moulding bullets, casting cannon, and filling their arsenals, if need be, in order to defend their rights.*' [10] The Convention did not respond.

The resolutions were a restatement of those formerly adopted

[1] *Natchez Weekly Courier*, Jan. 17, 1850.

[2] *Southron*, May 3, 1850. This paper continued its attacks after the Nashville Convention had adjourned. *Ib.*, June 21, July 5, Aug. 23, Sept. 9, 1850.

[3] March 1, 1850. [4] *Natchez Weekly Courier*, March 13, 1850.

[5] *New Orleans Picayune*, March 11, 1850. [6] *Ib.*, April 1, 20, 1852.

[7] *Ib.*, March 18, 1850.

[8] *Ib.*, June 3, 1850. Italics *Picayune's*.

[9] *Nashville Union*, June 15, 1850.

[10] *Alexandria Gazette*, June 17, 1850. Italics *Gazette's*.

by the States participating in the meeting, but they were wordy and without spirit. Even so, Unionist papers of the South denounced them.[1] The Address to the Southern People, however, written by Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina, had the old fury and counselled secession.[2] General Gideon Johnson Pillow spoke against Rhett's proposal.[3] A minority of the Committee on Resolutions refused to endorse it.[4] The *Southron* assailed it in withering editorials.[5] In the National capital the Nashville proceedings were practically ignored — the Convention was thought to have been composed of 'ultras' and not representative of the South.[6] Soon Washington opinion became settled that the Nashville gathering had been a fiasco.[7]

Yet extremists, North and South, kept up their clamorous struggle. A violently radical paper, the *Southern Press*, was established in Washington. Unionist journals in the South scorned and denounced it. Its editorials would, said the *New Orleans Picayune*, provide every 'abolition or Free Soil scribbler with fruitful themes of malicious retaliation.'[8] But the *Washington Union* was terribly alarmed: 'The Union is in danger — in imminent danger,' declared that organ of the National Democracy. The North must stop taunting the South, it said, for the feeling there was deep and indignant and Southern 'malcontents' were active.[9] For his editorial next day, the veteran

[1] *Southron*, July 5, 1850.

[2] *Washington Union*, Aug. 13, 1850, quoting the *New Orleans Picayune*.

[3] *Alexandria Gazette*, June 17, 1850. This fact is important. Pillow was one of the most influential men in the South. He had been a Major General in the Mexican War, took part in several battles and was twice severely wounded. At the time of the Nashville Convention he was forty-four years old, and, two years later, received several votes in the Democratic National Convention as his party's candidate for President. When Tennessee seceded, General Pillow organized the military forces of that State and, later, was made a Brigadier-General in the Confederate Army. He was a brave and determined Southern officer.

[4] *Nashville Union*, June 15, 1850. This minority was composed of two members from Tennessee, and one each from Florida, Alabama, and Arkansas. Their dissent was to the secession part of Rhett's address.

[5] *Southron*, Aug. 9, 30, 1850.

[6] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, June 11, in issue of June 24, 1850.

[7] *Ib.*, June 16, in issue of July 1, 1850.

[8] *Ib.*, July 1, 1850.

[9] *Washington Union*, July 3, 1850.

editor [1] dipped his pen in the ink of despair. The Fourth of July 'comes to us in clouds and darkness,' he wailed.[2]

From Nashville Rhett went to Macon, Georgia, and made an ardent speech for secession.[3] The *Washington Union* denounced him: 'Does he pride himself on being a traitor?' asked the venerable Ritchie.[4] But let 'Senators, of noble spirit, and stern virtue, never despair,' he wrote next day; for 'never did a nobler cause appeal to a free people' — the cause of a 'common country.' [5]

For the time being Rhett and his followers clamored in vain, although one day their words were to yield a harvest of bayonets. The struggle of 1850 was practically over, however, and the crowds that had thronged the capital went home; by the middle of June 'Washington is very still, and very few people in it.' [6] A disunion meeting at Natchez in September was a

[1] Thomas Ritchie was in his young manhood, one of the Jeffersonian 'triumvirate' in Virginia. See *Thomas Ritchie: A Study in Virginia Politics:* Charles Henry Ambler. Also *Marshall:* Beveridge, I, 210; IV, 10, 146, 174, 309, 335–39, 358. Ritchie was now seventy-two years old.

[2] *Washington Union,* July 4, 1850. It was otherwise seventy-two years ago, continued Ritchie. 'Fanaticism had not then raised her gorgon front to scowl upon any of our countrymen in consequence of their peculiar institutions. Who led the armies of liberty to victory? A slaveholder. Who framed the Declaration of our Nation's Independence? A slaveholder. What legislature proposed . . . to form the constitution for the whole? Still the Virginia slaveholders,' etc.

[3] Rhett demanded 'a temporary dissolution of the Union, by the secession of one or more of the Southern States.' Unless the North granted 'new guaranties in the Constitution,' the separation would become permanent. These guaranties were:

1. Expressly depriving Congress of the insulting pretension of a right to exclude us and our institutions . . . from the common Territories.

2. Expressly depriving Congress of the 'equally degrading pretension of a right to reject all applications from slave States to enter our Union.

3. 'Expressly taking away the power to intermeddle in any way with slave institutions, in United States arsenals, forts, and dock-yards — in the District of Columbia — and between States.

4. 'New guaranties for the strict performance of existing obligations to render up to their owners slaves fleeing to any free States.

5. 'New guaranties, expressly limiting the appropriation of common money to objects specified in the constitution.

6. 'New guaranties against the usurpation of taxing one citizen or one section of the Union for the benefit of another, by the duties of the general government.'

If the North would give all these 'guaranties,' Rhett declared that 'our condition will then be favorable for renewing the struggle with the despotic elements of government, and by watchfulness on our part freedom may descend from generation to generation for ages to come.' *Charleston Mercury,* clipped in *Alexandria Gazette,* Oct. 1, 1850.

[4] *Washington Union,* July 27, 1850. [5] *Ib.,* July 28, 1850.

[6] Webster to Edward Curtis, June 16, 1850. *Private Correspondence,* II, 373–4.

failure — only sixty-two persons were present. The *Courier* ridiculed it, although that devoted Unionist paper asserted that it was as ardent a supporter of Southern institutions as the hottest secessionist in the South.[1] Immediately the Unionists of Natchez and northwestern Mississippi countered with a tremendous demonstration.[2] In October a big Union meeting was held at Mobile, Alabama.[3] The *Louisville Journal* scourged the 'wretched disunionists' for their 'treasonable sentiments.'[4] So the immediate crisis was overcome, and, for a decade, the Union was secure.[5]

Union papers of the South rejoiced. 'The People were always for Compromise and Adjustment,' exclaimed the *Alexandria Gazette*. 'The People were always for Union and Peace. The People were always anxious to see Concord and Harmony. Their voice has, at last, been obeyed.'[6] 'Love of the Union still proves to be the strongest feeling in the bosom of an American,' exulted Ritchie.[7]

'All hail for the Union!
(Let no one gainsay)
Of States in communion —
Oh, last it alway,'

sang the *Southron* in an ecstasy of rejoicing.[8] The whole trouble had been stirred up by 'pestilent politicians' of both sections declared the *Louisville Journal*, 'wretched fellows' in the North who ranted about 'the slave power' and 'Southern demagogues' who prated of 'insults' and preached hatred. But, thank Heaven, 'an overwhelming majority of the people in all sections are true to the Union, and detest the furious demagoguism that would marshal them against each other as enemies.'[9]

[1] *Natchez Weekly Courier*, Sept. 11, 1850. A curious prophecy was made at this meeting. General Felix Huston asserted that disunion was inevitable and that it would occur about 1860. *Ib.*

[2] *Ib.*, Sept. 25, 1850. [3] *Ib.*, Oct. 23, 1850.

[4] *Louisville Journal*, Oct. 2, 1850.

[5] For the Nashville Resolution, see Ames, VI, 23–29. And for a clear account of the Nashville Convention, see Channing, VI, 79–80.

[6] *Alexandria Gazette*, Sept. 24, 1850.

[7] *Washington Union*, Sept. 15, 1850. [8] *Southron*, Oct. 4, 1850.

[9] *Louisville Journal*, June 26, 1850.

In its fervor for the Union, the *Southron* scourged Southern Democrats. 'Do they want disunion with all its untold horrors?' That journal even praised Senator Foote for advocating adjustment; his name would be inscribed among those who 'in the crisis of 1850, which threatened the destruction of the American Republic, stemmed the torrent of sectional fanaticism, and saved the South and the Union.' [1]

Just before the final voting began, the Washington correspondent of the *New Orleans Picayune* wrote that 'the Southern ultras' had finally decided not to manœuvre with Northern radicals for the passage of the Wilmot proviso to promote their scheme for secession; and that therefore the 'moderate men of the North' would stand by the South and 'kick the Wilmot proviso literally out of the House of Representatives.' The fact that 'Southern gentlemen' would even shake hands with the 'free soil rabble' disgusted patriotic Northern men; for 'of all the miserable factions that ever disturbed the halls of a legislature, the Wilmot provisoists are the worst.' If Southern men would ignore them, 'the whole set of small politicians would be destroyed forever. . . . They are the serpents whom the Southern ultras nurse in their bosoms, till they shall be stung by them, and perish.' [2]

So opposition disintegrated and, one after another, the measures suggested by Clay were enacted, the Southern radicals opposing all but the Fugitive Slave Law, and Northern radicals like Seward, Chase, and Giddings, resisting all except the admission of California and the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia. But the spirit of conciliation so far prevailed that even the Fugitive Slave Law passed both Houses by an overwhelming vote.[3] John P. Hale of New Hampshire raged in the Senate against the consummation of the villainy, while in the House, George W. Julian of Indiana declared that 'a tissue of more heartless and cold-blooded enactments never disgraced a civilized people.' [4] But the Unionist press of the whole

[1] *Southron*, Aug. 2, 1850.

[2] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune*, September 1, in issue of September 16, 1850.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 31st Cong. 1st Sess., XXI, Pt. II, 1659–60, 1810.

[4] *Slave Power:* Wilson, II, 302–3.

country rejoiced. Its sentiment was well expressed by the correspondent of the *New Orleans Picayune:* 'Civil war is nipped in the bud — rebellion is quelled before it had time to show its monster head.' [1]

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 which was to become so powerful a force in the renewal of sectional antagonism and which Lincoln was to defend so steadfastly, was designed to be a substitute for the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. That law had worked for half a century; but the brief and seemingly casual words of Justice Story in the Prigg case, that any State might forbid its officials to enforce the National statute and the encouragement thus given to oppose its execution, had wrecked the machinery which that law had created. It was to meet this situation that the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was enacted.

The principal difference between it and the former Act was that it provided that National instead of State officials should execute the law; and that United States Marshals who refused should be heavily fined. Federal Courts and Commissioners appointed by them were empowered to hear and determine applications for the return of runaway slaves and to issue certificates accordingly — all upon 'satisfactory proof' of the claimant's ownership and the slave's identity. The testimony of the slave was excluded and no jury trial was provided.[2] Heavy penalties were to be inflicted upon any one who hindered the arrest, harbored, or concealed, or assisted the escape of a fugitive.[3]

For the enactment of this law, Webster was blamed and praised more than any other one man or all other men combined. 'It is Mr. Webster's Fugitive Slave Law,' declared Theodore Parker.[4] Henry Wilson said the same thing.[5] And, in the sense that his vast influence had carried the compromise through, Webster was responsible for that statute. But, in the

[1] Washington Correspondence, *New Orleans Picayune,* Sept. 30, in issue of Oct. 14, 1850.

[2] This feature was new — the Act of 1793 made no such provision.

[3] *United States Statutes at Large,* IX, 462–5. Act Sept. 18, 1850.

[4] Parker, II, 330.

[5] Wilson, II, 307.

same sense, Webster had saved the Union.[1] Had the adjustment of 1850 not been made, it is certain that the South would have withdrawn at that time, and it is not unlikely that she would have succeeded in setting up a separate and independent government. Indeed, the heavy weight of probability is that, in 1850, effective military coercion of the South would not have been made.

If ever the South was to secede without serious armed opposition, Rhett was sound in urging her to do so in that fateful year. But love of the Union, 'the tender chords of memory,' which Lincoln vainly strove to touch ten years later, were still too strong in 1850; and, though their extremists continued to rage, the masses of the Southern people accepted the Compromise most of which they had at first opposed, and the South went on her way within the Union to a greater prosperity than she ever had known.

But in the North unrest at first increased. Slavery still existed in the National capital; it had not been excluded by act of Congress from the Territories; State Legislatures had been made powerless to prevent the recovery of fugitive slaves. Every point of agitation remained and one had been immeasurably strengthened. The Abolitionists continued their onslaught with increased energy and with two fresh and concrete objectives of attack, one the most eminent and conspicuous personage of his time, the other the most stringent act ever passed by Congress on slavery and one of the most inept and impolitic laws ever enacted.

Abolition tactics had been to vilify individuals, the more distinguished the better, since personalities attracted notice and high-placed men were in the public eye; and to make use of specific and picturesque incidents as illustrative of the 'Wrong' the Abolitionists assailed. 'The great mass of the people can never be made to stay and argue a long question. They must

[1] See Channing, VI, 84–5. Webster's speech was printed in practically every paper in the United States, and published in pamphlet form. It was translated into German and appeared in most German papers in the country. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 13, 1850.

The *Illinois Journal* said, April 25, 1850, that at that time, 125,000 copies of the Seventh of March Speech had been printed and 50,000 more ordered.

A 'beautiful' edition was printed in Washington, of which more than 100,000 copies were sold in a short time. *Washington Union*, March 29, 1850.

be made to feel it, through the hides of their idols,' declared Wendell Phillips. 'It is on this principle that every reform must take for its text the mistakes of great men. God gives us great scoundrels for texts to antislavery sermons. See to it, when Nature has provided you a monster like Webster, that you exhibit him — himself a whole menagerie — throughout the country [Great cheering].' And again: 'We will gibbet the name of every apostate so black and high that his children's children shall blush to bear it.' [1] These tactics were now employed with a vigor and skill hitherto unequalled.

Like strokes of adders was the attack of the Abolitionists on Webster. It began the instant the Seventh of March Speech appeared in the newspapers, continued while he lived and was kept up after he died.[2] He could be compared only to Benedict Arnold, or the Earl of Strafford, declared Theodore Parker at an abolition meeting in Faneuil Hall: [3] 'I wish we could take a mantle big and black enough, and go backward and cover up the shame of the great man who has fallen in the midst of us.' Why had Webster done a deed so base? The only 'reasonable' explanation was to consider it 'as a bid for the Presidency.' [4]

Another preacher was certain that President Fillmore induced Webster to make the Seventh of March Speech by offering to make him the head of his cabinet. 'The arch traitor was rewarded with the office of Secretary of State.' [5] One religious paper attributed the fall 'of this Lucifer' to his long years of 'intemperate habits.' [6]

'What if Daniel Webster has betrayed the cause of liberty,

[1] *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 48, 115.

[2] The Abolitionists refused to join the Free-Soilers in the funeral procession when Webster was buried. Phillips scourged the recusants who had denounced 'the treachery of Daniel Webster to the cause of liberty,' for having shown him honor in death: 'Social proprieties, self-respect and regard to consistency . . . will prevent us from giving such proof of this newly invented Christian courtesy [great cheering].' Phillips, 48–9.

[3] March 25, 1850, 'to consider the speech of Mr. Webster.' Parker, II, 170. Also the *Liberator*, April 5, 1850.

[4] Parker, II, 149, 166–7.

[5] *Some Recollections of our Anti-Slavery Conflict:* Samuel J. May, 349. So often was this accusation made that many actually believed it. Yet President Taylor did not die until more than four months after the Seventh of March Speech and Vice-President Fillmore had not the faintest idea that he ever would become President.

[6] *McGrawville* (N.Y.) *Christian Contributor*, clipped in the *Liberator*, April 12, 1850.

bent his supple knees anew to the Slave Power and dishonored the State!' exclaimed the *Liberator*. Webster was 'only one of eight hundred thousand [citizens of Massachusetts], many of whom are incomparably his superior.' He was far below the master tyrant, Calhoun, who was 'uppermost among the damned.' Indeed, 'damnation suits his [Calhoun's] taste and temperament.' If Calhoun was sane, he was 'not merely an adulterer, a thief, a barbarian, . . . a man-stealer,' privately and by retail, but publicly and by wholesale.[1] Garrison published Webster's speech in full and afterwards printed extracts from it under the caption: 'THE LATE SATANIC SPEECH OF DANIEL WEBSTER.' [2]

The devotion of Massachusetts to Webster was a terrible weapon in the hands of Phillips: 'When you have launched your spear into the rhinoceros hide of a Webster . . . every Whig and Democrat feels it,' he exclaimed at an anti-Webster meeting. 'It is not often . . . that Providence permits the eyes of twenty millions of thinking people to behold the fall of another Lucifer, from the very battlements of Heaven, down into that "lower deep of the lowest deep" of hell [Great sensation].' At another meeting, when some one in the audience called for cheers for Webster, Phillips exclaimed: 'Yes, three cheers for Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant, who all his life long has been bowing down to the Slave Power to secure the Presidency . . . and destined to be outwitted at last [Cheers].' [3]

In his poem, *Ichabod*, Whittier thus branded Webster:

> 'So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
> Which once he wore!
> The glory from his gray hairs gone
> Forevermore! . . .
> Then, pay the reverence of old days
> To his dead fame;
> Walk backward, with averted gaze,
> And hide the shame!' [4]

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[1] *Liberator*, March 15, 1850. [2] *Ib.*, April 12, 1850.

[3] *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 48–9, 67.

[4] 'The abolition propagandists of the North turned upon him [Webster] with a fury that showed they realized that what he had done was to put an end for the time being to their schemings. There are no more painful, no more unjustifiable, lines in American

The aged statesman was no less heartily sustained by his friends. Nearly a thousand of the first men of Boston published over their names a letter applauding the Seventh of March Speech and supporting the position he had taken.[1] The same thing was done in New York. When Webster visited Boston in April, 1850, cheering crowds followed him.[2] Similar demonstrations greeted him wherever he spoke. He was overwhelmed with commendation and requests for speeches. 'From the South, the West, and some parts of the middle States,' he wrote to his closest friend, 'addresses, letters, and calls for speeches, continue to come in without number.' [3]

Not once did he waver. At Capon Springs, Virginia, he declared that if the North would not obey the Fugitive Slave Law, 'the South would no longer be bound to observe the compact;' [4] but, on the other hand, the first step in secession would be promptly met. He would not be a part of an Administration, he declared, which, in such a case, did not act 'effectually, and at once.' [5] During the summer of 1851 he became very ill; [6] but throughout those strenuous months his spirit never succumbed, never faltered.

Notwithstanding vilification and abuse, Webster carried with him the people of moderate temper all over the country, and nowhere was there a stancher adherent of his doctrine of

poesy than those in John Greenleaf Whittier's "*Ichabod.*"' Channing, VI, 85. In 1880 Whittier sought to make amend by his poem 'The Lost Occasion.'

From the time of the Seventh of March Speech, Webster had been terribly harassed and his health had declined. 'Since the 7th of March, there has not been an hour in which I have not felt a "crushing" weight of anxiety and responsibility [over the compromise]. It is over. My part is acted, and I am satisfied. The rest I leave to stronger bodies and fresher minds. . . . I have lost a good deal of flesh, and you will think me thin and haggard.' Webster to Peter Harvey, Sept. 10, 1850. *Private Correspondence*, II, 385–6.

His eyes had failed him, too, and he could write only for one hour daily. Webster to Harvey, Sept. 12, 1850. *Ib.*, 386–8.

[1] *Boston Advertiser*, April 3, 1850. This letter was widely published throughout the country. Among those who signed it were Rufus Choate, Charles C. Parsons, Caleb Loring, William Appleton, Charles P. Curtis, George Ticknor, Benj. R. Curtis, William H. Prescott [the historian], J. A. Lowell, C. C. Felton [Prof. of Greek in Harvard], and Jared Sparks [the author, then President of Harvard].

[2] *Ib.*, April 30, 1850. See Webster, XIII, 386–9.

[3] Webster to Peter Harvey, April 13, 1850. *Private Correspondence*, II, 365–6.

[4] Webster, XIII, 439. [5] *Ib.*, 436.

[6] Webster to Fillmore, July 26, 1852. *Private Correspondence*, II, 544.

American solidarity than was Lincoln. The influence over the Northern people of Webster's tremendous appeals for the Union, from the reply to Hayne to the Seventh of March Speech and thereafter, cannot be estimated. It was the noble passages from Webster, learned in school by Northern boys, that prepared them to respond, with arms in their hands, when Lincoln called them to support the National Government and to save the Union.

The basic abolition principle that no human statute ought to be obeyed which was in conflict with the commands of God, was applied to the new Fugitive Slave Law with the same passion that it had been used against the Act which it superseded. 'The natural duty to keep the law of God overrides the obligation to observe any human statute,' Parker said in a sermon delivered immediately after the Fugitive Slave Law went into effect.[1] Their oath to execute it was 'not morally binding' [2] even on officers of the United States, and he who observed it was worse than a Herod, a Nero, a Jeffreys, or any monster of history.[3]

All citizens were 'morally bound' to violate the statute.[4] Enlistment in the army did not relieve a man from the 'jurisdiction of natural law and the dominion of God.' In the eye of the Deity, President Polk had murdered all who were killed in the Mexican War.[5] For that matter, asserted Parker, the doctrine of obedience to law 'lies at the basis of every despot's throne.' [6] It was a 'false idea' that 'the people are morally bound to obey any law . . . until it is repealed' [7] — no, indeed; we must not 'keep a wicked law.' [8]

God's idea, said Parker, was that of 'a government of all, for all, by all,' which would assure justice and equality to everyone.[9] The contrary idea was that of slavery, and there could be no peace in the United States 'until one or the other of these ideas is cast out of the councils of the nation.' The Democratic idea — 'the American idea' — must and would prevail, and the day would come when we would have 'a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people.' But this was 'irre-

[1] Sunday, Sept. 22, 1850. Parker, II, 256.
[2] *Ib.*, 270. [3] *Ib.*, 345–7. [4] *Ib.*, 271. [5] *Ib.*, 264–5.
[6] *Ib.*, 298. [7] *Ib.*, 332. [8] *Ib.*, 301. [9] *Ib.*, 288.

concilably hostile' to the slave theory which required 'a government of all the people by a part of the people — the masters; for a part of the people — the masters; against a part of the people — the slaves.' 'It is not possible for these two ideas to continue to live in peace.' No! 'There must be war between them before there can be peace.' [1]

From the pulpit Parker counselled physical resistance. 'If I were the fugitive, and could escape in no other way, I would kill him [the person seizing a runaway slave] with as little compunction as I would drive a mosquito from my face.' [2]

Since fugitive slaves could not be tried by jury, Phillips and Garrison urged them to arm themselves and kill their pursuers, in order to secure a trial by jury for homicide.[3] Insurrection was openly advocated as wise and righteous, if necessary to obtain freedom. 'You will say this is bloody doctrine, — anarchical doctrine; it will prejudice people against the cause. . . . I know it will,' said Phillips, in his quiet voice. As to the statute, 'we will ourselves trample this accursed Fugitive Slave Law under foot [Great cheering].' [4] In Boston the negroes were highly excited and held meetings.[5] At Faneuil Hall, Sumner, although still designated a United States Commissioner, declared that he would not obey the 'accursed bill.' [6]

There was no danger that the South would secede, said Parker, in his famous Thanksgiving Day sermon, preached in 1850. If the Union were in peril, a hundred thousand Massachusetts men would rally 'with the cartridge-box at their side, and firelock on their shoulder.' Not that the North would be a 'loser' if the South did withdraw, but he doubted 'if the North will yet allow them to go.' Still, 'a serious attempt to execute the fugitive slave law . . . ought to dissolve' the Union. The Constitution was not sacrosanct. It was merely 'the machinery of the national mill; and suppose we agree to take it out and put in new; we might get worse, very true, but we might get better.' [7]

[1] Parker, II, 176–7, 293. Compare Lincoln's House-divided speech (1858): 'I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free;' and the Address at Gettysburg (1863): 'That government of the people, by the people, for the people,' etc.

[2] *Ib.*, 258. [3] *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 71–81, 85, 91. [4] *Ib.*, 80.

[5] Wilson, II, 305. [6] *Ib.*, 308. Nov. 6, 1850. [7] Parker, II, 302–3.

Indeed, as we have seen, the leading assailants of slavery and the South — for they identified the institution and the section — were either cold or openly hostile to the Union. Not long after Clay introduced his Compromise Beecher announced in the New York *Independent* that 'whenever the Union comes between a Christian people and their Christianity, it becomes a snare. . . . There are many evils infinitely greater' than 'dissolution of our Union. . . . Religion and humanity are a price too dear to pay even for the Union.' [1] A popular Unitarian minister of Syracuse, New York, the Reverend Samuel J. May, declared in a sermon of which he was very proud, that 'if such a law [Fugitive Slave] . . . be essential to our Republic . . . let it [the Republic] be broken up.' [2]

In such fashion did Abolitionists belabor Webster, the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Union itself. The Act was an incident, however, to the 'Great Iniquity.' Slavery must go, no matter what the cost. If Webster's course was followed, the end would be a repetition of Santo Domingo. 'God forgive us for our cowardice,' cried Parker in a sermon, 'if we let it come to this, that three millions . . . of degraded human beings, degraded by us, must wade through slaughter to their unalienable rights.' [3] Nothing must stand in the way of emancipation. 'If the Bible defends slavery . . . so much the worse for the Bible.' [4]

The time approached when the American people would do as those of France and South American countries had done, prophesied Phillips. 'The hour will come — God hasten it! — when the American people shall so stand on the deck of their Union, "built i' th' eclipse, and rigged with curses dark." If I live to see that hour, I shall say to every slave, Strike now for Freedom! [Long-continued and deafening cheers.]' [5]

What Theodore Parker proclaimed from the pulpit, Wendell Phillips fulminated from the rostrum, and William Lloyd Garrison wrote in the *Liberator*, smaller men of less restraint, repeated

[1] Quoted in the *Liberator*, March 8, 1850.

[2] May, 360. 'You are bound to use force and arms to prevent a fellow man from being enslaved,' was his opinion of the Fugitive Slave Law. This sermon was preached at Syracuse, Rochester, and Oswego during October, 1850. *Ib.*, 356.

[3] Parker, II, 172. [4] *Ib.*, 196.

[5] The Melodeon, Boston, April 12, 1852. *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 84–5.

in language even more extravagant and bloody. 'Death to Kidnappers,' ran a resolution introduced by Rev. Henry C. Wright in the Western Anti-Slavery Society at Salem, Ohio, September 16, 1850 — 'DEATH TO KIDNAPPERS, whether they come to us as voters, congressmen, presidents, judges, marshals, constables, *posse-comitatus* or slave-holders.' [1]

Wright declared that 'instant death' should be inflicted 'without judge or jury' on anybody who tried to execute the Fugitive Slave Law.[2] Stephen S. Foster stated before the New England Anti-Slavery Convention in Boston, September, 1850, that if even Webster should attempt to return a fugitive slave, it 'will cost him his life.' Amid applause, Foster asked his fellow Abolitionists to 'tread . . . under our feet . . . any portions of it [the Bible] that sanctions slavery;' and Wright denounced the Bible as 'a self-evident falsehood,' if it recognized slavery.[3] 'O, my fellow-citizens, blood has been flowing . . . from the backs of our enslaved countrymen ever since 1776, and is flowing now,' cried the Reverend B. B. Raymond, a Baptist clergyman at a meeting in Syracuse, New York, held in protest against the Fugitive Slave Law. 'Yes and blood will flow . . . on the battlefields of a civil war if we carry out this accursed law.' [4]

These are not extravagant examples of the language which Parker, Garrison, and Phillips inspired among ardent and excitable men and women throughout the United States. Nor were the Abolitionists the only assailants of the Fugitive Slave Law. The anti-slavery men were quite as vigorous in their condemnation of it, albeit their language was not so violent. Increasing numbers of clergymen preached the doctrine of the 'higher law' or 'God's law,' as irreconcilable with 'slave law.' Big meetings of these opponents of the Congressional adjustment of the sectional conflict were held in several Northern States.[5]

'Repeal the law! Repeal the law!' became the anti-slavery war-cry throughout the North. The effect on Southern Union men was unhappy and portentous. 'Let the fanatics howl on!'

[1] *Liberator*, Oct. 4, 1850.

[2] Wright to Garrison, Sept. 19, 1850, in *Liberator*, Oct. 4, 1850.

[3] *Liberator*, Sept. 27, 1850. [4] May, 355. [5] Wilson, II, 309–12.

exclaimed the conservative Unionist *Alexandria Gazette*. 'Too long have they been suffered to do violence to our feelings and injury to our interests.' They could do no harm 'if the law is upheld and sustained. . . . Never was a nation cursed with a more pestiferous and inexcusable set of mischief-makers!' [1] Resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law angered and alarmed the *Southron*. In the same issue containing a heavily displayed call for a 'GRAND UNION MASS MEETING' at Jackson, Mississippi, an editorial appeared, declaring that the *Southron* had believed that opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law would be confined to Abolitionists, but that if the paper had been mistaken — if resistance became general throughout the North — then disunion would surely come.[2]

Disunion would be 'horrible,' again said the *Southron*, but 'slavery' of the South to the North would be a still greater evil. The denial by 'ruthless majorities' of property, liberty, and security, would 'produce inevitable revolution' by the minority. If the Fugitive Slave Law should be repealed or become 'a mere nullity, if swarms of slave stealers are to hover along the border slave States and seize our property, and are to be encouraged by the North, inevitable resistance and measures of retaliation will be the first result, and then disunion.' [3]

Far larger than the abolition and anti-slavery meetings were the public demonstrations in the larger Northern cities in approval of Webster and in support of the Compromise and the Union. One such gathering at Castle Garden in New York, October 30, 1850, was notable. It was sponsored by the leaders of the bar and the important business men of that city. One of the speakers was General Winfield Scott.[4] Another Union meeting at Faneuil Hall a month later was still more impressive; the foremost citizens of Boston attended and Benjamin R. Curtis, Rufus Choate, and two leading Democrats addressed the assemblage. One of these Democrats denounced those who refused to obey the law: 'It is revolution, or it is treason,' he cried.[5] Similar Union gatherings met in country towns all over the

[1] *Alexandria Gazette*, Oct. 10, 1850. [2] *Southron*, Oct. 25, 1850.
[3] *Ib.*, Nov. 8, 1850. [4] Wilson, II, 316.
[5] *Ib.*, 317. The speaker was Benjamin F. Hallett.

North. At Belleville, Illinois, 'Union' resolutions were adopted approving the Compromise, demanding cessation of slavery agitation, urging the Legislature to rescind its resolutions in favor of the Wilmot proviso, endorsing the Fugitive Slave Law and pledging 'actual personal effort' to execute it.[1]

Many eminent ministers also sustained the Fugitive Slave Law, the faithful execution of which they associated with the preservation of the Union. At a great Union meeting in New Haven, Dr. Nathaniel Taylor, Principal of the Theological Department of Yale, denied that the Fugitive Slave clause of the Constitution was contrary to the 'will of God.' Rev. Dr. Ichabod Spencer, a Presbyterian clergyman of Brooklyn, unsparingly denounced the Abolitionist clergy. Dr. Orville Dewey, the leading Unitarian preacher of New York, said that he would rather send his own brother or his child into slavery than to see the Union broken up.[2] Under the power of Union sentiment, the abolition frenzy subsided for the moment [3] — but only for the moment.

So the vast majority of the people remained calm, accepted the Compromise, sustained the law, remained faithful to the Government and devoted to the Union. Among them was Lincoln who never was in disagreement with general and settled public opinion. But the abolition assault was quickly renewed and it was so determined, persistent, and sincere that it sensibly influenced common sentiment and made thousands of converts to the anti-slavery cause.

The source of the abolition outburst against the Fugitive Slave Law, against Webster, against the Government, was not only the statute itself, but certain dramatic attempts to execute it in New York, Boston, and Pennsylvania. In one of these a slave owner was killed in an affray with free negroes who were protecting the fugitive; and all the 'recoveries' and 'surrenders' were given wide publicity by the press.[4] These incidents were

[1] *Belleville Advocate*, Nov. 28, 1850. This meeting was typical of thousands.

[2] Wilson, II, 318. Rev. Samuel J. May hotly asserted that not one minister in a hundred ever spoke against slavery or opposed the Fugitive Slave Law. May, 365.

[3] Wilson, II, 320.

[4] For brief and accurate account of these cases, see Channing, VI, 104–12. And see Parker, II, 258–61; Wilson, II, 304–5, 324–36. Of these narratives that of Channing

few in number but each of them was made a striking example of the infamy of the Fugitive Slave Law.

In this fashion was the public mind prepared for a most effective piece of propaganda against slavery and the South. Nine months after the Fugitive Slave Law went into effect and while the country was ringing with denunciations of the first cases of its enforcement, the *National Era*, organ of the American Anti-Slavery Society, began the serial publication of a story entitled *Uncle Tom's Cabin: or Life among the Lowly*. The author was Harriet Beecher Stowe, sister of Henry Ward Beecher and Edward Beecher, and wife of a Presbyterian minister and Professor in the Theological Seminary in Andover, Calvin E. Stowe.[1]

The narrative was written with dramatic genius. It was a succession of incidents, each picturesque, some startling. In this fashion the whole abolition argument and appeal was presented. The entire story, or any section of it, could be dramatized and acted with little effort. Characters were so drawn as to give the impression that they were typical. The distinct and emphatic idea thus conveyed to the reader was that, as a class, the slaves were frightfully abused and yearning for freedom; that Southern men, with tepid exceptions, were tyrannical and vile; that, in general, Southern women were incompetent, sluggish, and cruel. While figures were made to appear and things to happen that showed the easier side of slavery, they were subordinated to the drama and were used to make prominent the horrible and the base.

Early in 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published in book form. One hundred thousand copies were sold in two months, and within a year the American public had absorbed three times that number.[2] Not a city, town or village in the North was without it, and it was read even in the South. Book stores in

is the only trustworthy one, since he writes with scholarly detachment and impartiality.

[1] *Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe:* Charles Edward Stowe, 148–53, 156.

The materials for the novel were the accounts that had long been printed in abolition pamphlets, especially the collection of *Slavery as it is*, to which reference has been made, together with Mrs. Stowe's observations when her father and husband were stationed at Cincinnati. She also applied to Frederick Douglass for data.

[2] Stowe, 160.

Springfield, Illinois, advertised Mrs. Stowe's novel soon after it was published, and one of the first to buy a copy was Herndon. No positive evidence exists that Lincoln read it, but we know that it was at his hand and that it was often discussed in his hearing.

At any rate, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the literary sensation of the period. It did more to create sentiment against slavery and even more against the South, than all that had been or was to be spoken or written on the subject.[1] In this sense Mrs. Stowe may be said to have been a principal agent in bringing about the Civil War. 'Is this the little woman who made this big war?' asked Lincoln when she went to see the President during that conflict.[2]

Mrs. Stowe's novel was 'rather an event than a book' which had roused 'the world by the vigor and pathos of its appeals,' declared Wendell Phillips, and his hearers responded with 'enthusiastic cheers.' But the way had been prepared for its success, Phillips truthfully said; Mrs. Stowe's book never would have been written or read but for the long years of anti-slavery agitation that had preceded it. 'This effort of genius . . . might have fallen dead and unnoticed in 1835,' he rightly declared. Look at the *White Slave*, Hildreth's great novel, 'born out of due time.'[3] But *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had appeared at the moment of Fate — the Abolitionists had 'made the trembling South demand the Fugitive Slave Law,' and the Fugitive Slave Law had 'provoked Mrs. Stowe to the good work of *Uncle Tom*.'[4] Whittier wrote to Garrison that Mrs. Stowe's book was 'glorious.'[5] In a long review in a Paris journal George Sand concluded that Mrs. Stowe was 'in the true spirit of the word, consecrated.'[6]

Its success abroad was as great as in the United States. The novel was translated into nearly every language spoken in

[1] '*Uncle Tom's Cabin* made the crack of the slavedriver's whip, and the cries of the tortured blacks ring in every household in the land, till human hearts could endure it no longer.' Stowe, 155.

[2] *Life and Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, ed. by Annie Fields, 269.

[3] *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 131. [4] *Ib.*, 136.

[5] Whittier to Garrison, May, 1852. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Introduction, xvi, ed. 1882.

[6] *Ib.*, xxviii.

Europe.[1] One edition appeared in Arabic. Four separate versions were published in France, two in Holland, fourteen in Germany; and thirty editions were printed in London alone, in six months during 1852.[2] Even the cautious *Edinburgh Review* declared that 'the sale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the most marvellous literary phenomenon that the world has witnessed' — it was a 'political pamphlet,' and it had made impossible the complete execution of the Fugitive Slave Law.[3] There can be no possible doubt that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* largely created that European public opinion which was so strong an influence in preventing recognition of the Southern Confederacy by England and France.

The South responded more with contempt than in wrath. In *DeBow's Review*, 'A Southern Woman,' reviewing Mrs. Stowe's *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which appeared a year later than the novel, observed that Mrs. Stowe's books had 'sunk so low,' it was charity to make note of them.[4] The novel was merely an 'accumulation of all the instances that can be found of cruelty or crime among slaveholders,' declared William Gilmore Simms.[5] The *Southern Literary Messenger* reviewed *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, declared the editor, only because 'we may be compelled one day (God grant that day may never come) to repel with the bayonet' the spirit that inspired Mrs. Stowe, unless that spirit were promptly exposed by the pen. But since 'this slanderous work has found its way into every section of our country,' the *Messenger* felt that 'the brand of falsehood must be placed upon it.' Still, perhaps the volume should not be taken too seriously because some of it was so absurd that it 'wouldn't go down as part and parcel of a burnt cork melodrama of the Bowery,' while other portions were not only untrue, but '*impossible*.' If Mrs. Stowe was so fond of the Bible, let her observe the Commandment: 'THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR.'[6] *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was 'a plot against the peace

[1] Whittier to Garrison, May, 1852. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Introduction, xlii, ed. 1882.

[2] *Critical Dictionary of English Literature:* Samuel Austin Allibone, II, 2278–9.

[3] Reprint of an article in *Edinburgh Review* on 'Slavery in the United States.' London, 1856.

[4] *DeBow's Review*, XV, 486–96. [5] Simms, 217.

[6] *Southern Literary Messenger*, XVIII, 630–8 (Oct., 1852). Capitals in magazine.

of society,' exclaimed a preacher and professor of Annapolis, Rev. E. J. Stearns.[1]

As 'A Carolinian,' Edward Pringle of Charleston wrote a brochure in reply to Mrs. Stowe's narrative which was typical of the Southern attitude toward it. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would work 'infinite injury,' he said, because it aroused fanaticism in the North and rage in the South. Its imaginary 'horrors' would bring a 'new birth of abolition apostles' and confirm the growing Southern opinion that the whole North had been abolitionized. Pringle had never seen nor heard of such scenes as those portrayed by Mrs. Stowe; but he could not deny any of them, he admitted. The South abhorred the abuses of the slave system far more than she did, he wrote; but Southern people '*knew*' about slavery and she did not, and they knew that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a false picture. 'She has filled her Northern readers with a delusion.' [2]

In spite of Mrs. Stowe's story and the renewal of abolition strivings, the vast majority of the Northern people seemed to be satisfied with the situation and the Nation was in a kind of political apathy when the presidential campaign of 1852 opened. But the sentiment against slavery and hostility to the South were growing in every Northern State. A new party was forming. In Massachusetts, Free-Soilers and Democrats elected Charles Sumner to the Senate — the same combination that had made Chase a Senator in 1849, 'the temporary triumph of a shameful coalition,' said the *Alexandria Gazette*.[3]

[1] *Notes on Uncle Tom's Cabin:* Rev. E. J. Stearns, A.M., late professor in St. John's College, Annapolis (Philadelphia, 1853), 9.

[2] *Slavery in the Southern States:* A Carolinian [Edward Pringle], Cambridge, 1852. Pringle gave all the Southern arguments for slavery which we have reviewed in Chapter I, stating them with surprising moderation and restraint. He seemed mainly to be depressed by the renewal of sectional animosity which he thought Mrs. Stowe's novel would cause, as Pringle contended, by its untruthful presentment of Southern society. This brochure was first published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, IV, 478.

Two Southern novels of no merit were published in answer to Mrs. Stowe's book, but had little sale and passed with scant notice: *The Cabin, and the Parlor, or Slaves and Masters:* J. Thornton Randolph, Philadelphia, 1852, the author of which claimed that his novel was 'a faithful transcript of real life' and that 'he has himself witnessed all the scenes described,' etc.; and *Life at the South, or Uncle Tom's Cabin as it is:* W. L. G. Smith, Buffalo, 1852. This novel was dedicated to Clay. In his preface the author said that the Southern people considered slavery as 'an heirloom,' which has descended from the 'immortal charter of independence,' etc.

[3] May 15, 1851.

But, in general, the great body of the public was listless. Men were more concerned about economic conditions than over emancipation of slaves, wished more for quiet and prosperity than for upheaval and strife. In this situation we shall now see Lincoln again appear upon the political stage, in a smaller part than he had ever played before. Thereafter we shall behold mighty events burst upon the country and witness the fashion in which Lincoln met them.

CHAPTER III

WESTERN DEVELOPMENT AND SLAVERY

The Nation has passed its perils and it is free, prosperous, and powerful. LINCOLN, July 16, 1852.

We are about to open a new market to the traffickers in flesh that haunt the shambles of the South. SUMNER, in Kansas-Nebraska debate, 1854.

I believe that the passage of this bill is of no practical importance, so far as the slave States are concerned. I support it as a measure of peace. Senator HUNTER of Virginia, in *ib.*

Northern rights and Southern rights! Sir, I know of no such divisions or distinctions under the Constitution. DOUGLAS, in *ib.*

IN no like space of time in American history are the influences that shape public opinion better shown than in the brief period from 1850 to 1854. Moreover, the events of those years were determinative of Lincoln's career. Indeed, but for the last of these events, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, it is well-nigh certain that he would have been known only to some thousands in Illinois and to them merely as a circuit-riding lawyer, local politician, and stump speaker. No detail, therefore, of that epochal circumstance or the steps that led to it, can be omitted in the narrative of Lincoln's public life.

'Repeal! Repeal! Repeal!' Everywhere throughout the North during 1851 that was the incessant cry of opponents of the Fugitive Slave Law. Illinois as a whole, however, was not keenly responsive to the anti-slavery movement;[1] but even there, and especially in the northern part of the State, many meetings were held, fiery speeches made, angry resolutions adopted.[2] The press, too, was emphatic and Chicago papers

[1] Most people, in the North, particularly in the Mississippi Valley, were apathetic on slavery and opposed to the agitation of it. 'Had I been in Congress I think I should have voted . . . for the fugitive slave law. . . . We know it cannot be repealed, and an attempt to do it must only produce agitation. . . . These . . . are the sentiments of the great body of the people. They do not wish this slavery agitation. They consider the [Wilmot] proviso as a humbug, as it most certainly is, however humiliating it may be to make that confession after having cheered it, spoken for it, and voted for it, as I admit I have.' Private letter of a Whig member of the Ohio Legislature, printed, with approval, in the Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 8, 1851.

[2] *Western Citizen*, July 15, Aug. 5, Sept. 30, Oct. 28, etc., of meetings and resolutions in different places.

were particularly clamorous. Abolitionists, Free-Soilers, and anti-slavery people generally ignored the fact that the Fugitive Slave Law was a vital part of the Great Compromise.

In this evolution of sentiment Lincoln took no part. As he afterward declared, he was against the abrogation of that tempest-arousing statute. This, indeed, was the prevailing view of central and southern Illinois at that time; and, as we have seen, Lincoln almost perfectly reflected public opinion. His only misinterpretation of sentiment at home was his attitude toward the Mexican War while in Congress, and he was in that but supporting the national party program; but not again did he fail to express dominant popular thought and feeling. He neither led nor retarded mass movements, but accurately registered them. In short, Lincoln was the spokesman of the people. So it came about that he was 'available' when, at a critical hour, a new party sought for a presidential candidate.

In the free States, court after court, State and Federal, upheld the Fugitive Slave Law and urged obedience to it.[1] But the agitation grew. Several Northern Legislatures passed resolutions insisting on the overthrow of the Act which had been and was the heart of the adjustment of 1850. Old line Whigs, like Lincoln, disapproved this crusade against the statute, and his favorite paper, the *National Intelligencer*, rebuked it as a 'crime quite equal . . . to . . . Secession.'[2]

With the exception of Mississippi and South Carolina, the South, as a section, was slow to take the alarm. Those States,

[1] For example: Sup. Court, Mass., in unanimous opinion by Chief Justice Shaw, *in re* petition of Thos. Sims for writ of habeas corpus. *National Intelligencer*. May 10, 1851.

Justice Nelson of the U.S. Supreme Court in charge to New York Grand Jury. *Ib.*, April 19, 1851.

Justice McLean of U.S. Supreme Court in charge to Ohio Grand Jury. *Ib.*, Nov. 8, 1851.

[2] Weekly *National Intelligencer*, April 12, 1851, quoting, with approval, the *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*, April 7, denouncing Massachusetts agitators who '*plot treason, talk treason, and would act treason if they dared.*'

During April, 1851, the *National Intelligencer* published three articles by Dr. Daniel Drake of Cincinnati, the physician to whom Lincoln had written the mysterious letter ten years before. Dr. Drake insisted that Northern States ought to prohibit free negroes from living within or even passing through them, and that the slave states should forbid emancipation of slaves except on the condition that they would not go to the free states. Drake to Dr. John C. Warren, Dec. 26, 31, 1850, and Jan. 4, 1851, in Weekly *National Intelligencer*, April 5, 12, 1851.

however, were prompt and vigorous. In the early winter of 1850 their Legislatures provided for the election of delegates to another Southern Convention to consider Southern interests and the maintenance of 'Southern rights.' [1]

But the remainder of the South was cold to secession proposals. Georgia expressed the general feeling and opinion in the famous 'Georgia Platform,' adopted by the Union Convention held at the State capital in December, 1850. This assembly declared for peace and union on the basis of the Great Compromise and particularly on the observance of the Fugitive Slave Law.

In a long Union editorial, the national Whig organ applauded the pronouncement of the Georgia Convention. That State 'has decisively repelled the tempter,' exclaimed the *National Intelligencer;* — South Carolina was 'actually attempting a *DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION.*' [2] Feverishly the great Whig journal insisted upon quiet and fraternal sentiment.[3] Those former political enemies, Cobb and Toombs, wrote strong Union letters in support of the Georgia platform and in scathing rebuke of Southern and Northern fanatics alike who, they declared, were working to the destruction of the Republic.[4]

'*If* Virginia *shall lead*,' Langdon Cheves of South Carolina had said to the Nashville Convention of 1850, 'I have not the least apprehension that any blood will be spilt.' [5] Virginia would not lead then, and now, by a vote of one hundred and ten to one, her Legislature adopted fervent Union resolutions against the rash action of South Carolina. She condemned the slavery agitation, declared for that institution, and asserted that any interference with it would destroy harmony between the sections.[6] Mississippi hastened to repudiate her disunion avowals of a few months earlier and took her stand alongside

[1] Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Jan. 4, 1851. [2] *Ib.*, Jan. 4, 11, 1851.

[3] *Ib.*, Dec. 3, 1850, Feb. 15, 1851.

[4] Cobb to A. H. Chappel *et al.* (Committee), Feb. 17, 1851; Toombs to same, Feb. 15, 1851. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, March 22, 1851.

[5] Weekly *National Intelligencer*, April 5, 1851.

[6] *Ib.*, March 29, 1851. 4th of July toasts in Virginia were hotly pro-Union, while those in South Carolina were as emphatically anti-Union. *Ib.*, July 12, 1851, giving examples.

Virginia and Georgia.[1] South Carolina, however, stood by her guns and prepared for war.[2]

Throughout 1851 the assault on the Fugitive Slave Law continued all over the North and the excitement was increased by two notable and highly picturesque cases.[3] Just before Congress met in December, 1851, the first blood was shed in the attempt to recover escaping slaves under the new law — the owner was killed and his son wounded by a band of runaway negroes in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with whom the fugitive had taken refuge.[4]

So it came about that when the Thirty-second Congress convened, Southern Senators and Representatives were angry and alarmed. Those who had declared for the Union and rebuked secessionists were chagrined, despondent, resentful. The Fugitive Slave Law was the one substantial and practical concession which the South had secured in the Compromise of 1850. Yet, they said, Legislatures of Northern States had actually passed laws in defiance of it and in contempt of national authority; abolition lecturers and speakers, swarming over the North, were fulminating against it; and here were Southern men murdered and wounded in a Northern State by slaves who had been 'enticed' to leave their masters.

The Union men of the South in Congress determined that their section must be reassured of the good faith of the Great Compromise. On the second day of the session Senator Foote of Mississippi gave notice that he would offer a joint resolution that the 'measures of adjustment, so-called,' of 1850 were to be

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., xxiv, Pt. 1, 35–6. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 29, 1851.

[2] Toward the end of 1851 that State contracted for arms and munitions, all to be furnished by May, 1853. *Ib.*, Dec. 20, 1853.

Nevertheless there was a strong unionist sentiment in South Carolina. Joel R. Poinsett publicly denounced secession talk. *Ib.*, March 22, 1851.

[3] That of Shadrach [Frederick Jenkins] in Boston, Feb., 1851. Shadrach was arrested and imprisoned, but was forcibly released by a mob of free negroes and escaped to Canada. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 22, 1851.

The case of Thomas Sims, Boston, April, 1851. Sims was heavily guarded, adjudged, a runaway slave, and delivered by armed officers to his owner. Much has been made of this case. Phillips delivered two of his strongest speeches with it as his subject. *Speeches and Lectures:* Phillips, 55–97.

[4] Channing, vi, 106–7.

considered a 'definitive settlement of the questions growing out of the system of domestic slavery.' [1]

Upon this proposal a gusty and intermittent debate sprang up. Factious politicians were wrecking the Great Compromise, said Southern Unionists; Northern and Southern radicals were again arousing sectionalism; nationalists of the South were being assailed by secessionists, whose weapons were inflammatory speeches and editorials from the North, especially those against the Fugitive Slave Law. In the North 'ferocious and bloody scenes' had occurred, and that, too, under deplorable instigation; in the South malcontents were spreading the report that the North actually intended to exclude slavery from 'our vacant Territories.' So Congress must assert that the arrangement of 1850 was definitive and slavery agitation must be stopped.[2]

Instantly and with much heat Southern extremists who, like Northern extremists, had opposed the Compromise, resisted Foote's proposal. Not by a vote of the Senate could he be made to 'kiss the rod of oppression,' cried Senator Andrew Pickens Butler of South Carolina.[3] Away with Compromises that violated the Constitution and sacrificed Southern rights! Only Southern solidarity could assure Southern safety. Foote's resolution was worse than futile; if passed, it would merely 'let loose . . . the waters of agitation.' [4]

Rhett said that he cared not when he should be called a secessionist, for, he exclaimed, 'I say that I am one now.' [5] A State had a right to secede, and secession was not treason. What was that crime? It was the violation of allegiance to a

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIV, Pt. I, 12.

[2] Foote's speech, Dec. 8, 1851. *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIV, Pt. I, 35–6.

[3] Butler was the son of William Butler of Columbia, South Carolina, who served with gallantry and distinction under Lincoln, Pickens, Greene, Lee, and Sumter in the Revolution. The Butler family was one of the most respected in the South and was very proud of its traditions.

It was Senator Butler whom Sumner assailed in his speech in the Senate in 1856, an incident that led to the physical assault on Sumner by Preston Brooks, a relative of Butler. Although only fifty-five years of age in 1851, his hair was snow-white and he was otherwise aged in appearance.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIV, Pt. I, 36.

[5] *Ib.*, XXV, Appendix, 61.

sovereign. Who was that sovereign, the State or the Nation — 'it is a question upon which bayonets may be crossed and blood may be spilled.' [1] In an impassioned reply a month later, Clemens of Alabama called Rhett a 'coward,' 'knave,' and 'traitor.' [2]

Talk in lobbies and on the streets was excited and forbidding. At a crowded Congressional banquet on Washington's birthday Toombs, in a fervid and brilliant speech, brought the throng huzzahing to its feet by declaring that, while he was for the Union, it could not stand a day and ought not to stand an hour if the Federal Government tried to control the internal policy of the States.[3]

Not long after this explosion of banquet sentiment, the State Convention of South Carolina formally asserted 'her right, without let, hindrance, or molestation from any power whatsoever, to secede from the said Federal Union,' claimed that she had ample justification for doing so, and 'that she forbears the exercise of that manifest right of self-government from considerations of expediency only.' [4] The organ of the Illinois Democracy (and well-nigh Douglas's mouthpiece) urged the National Government to act as Jackson had done — 'the Union must be preserved against all traitorous disunionists both North and South.' [5]

Thus from what was said and done, in and out of Congress, as the session wore on, two vital facts clearly emerged. If tranquillity was to be restored and maintained, the Compromise of 1850 must be reaffirmed and the dispute over slavery banished from Congress forever. While Foote's resolution never came to a vote, the discussion of it brought to a head the sentiment that shaped the platforms of political parties in the presidential contest of 1852.

On June 1 of that year, the Democratic National Convention met at Baltimore. The attendance was unusually large, for all members of the party felt that a crisis was at hand. By March 28 Washington was 'thronged almost to suffocation' by dele-

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., xxv, Appendix, 47. [2] *Ib.*, xxiv, Pt. 1, 647.
[3] Weekly *National Intelligencer*, March 20, 1852.
[4] *Ib.*, May 8, 1852. [5] *Illinois State Register*, March 5, 1852.

gates on their way to Baltimore.[1] Southern Whigs, like Toombs, decided to support the Democratic nominee if, in the Democratic platform, the Compromise of 1850 was endorsed as a finality.[2] But they were fearful that Douglas would be chosen.[3] They found it hard to support that vigorous Democrat, just as Northern Democrats in the Legislature of Illinois, less than three years later, refused to support Lincoln because he was a Whig, notwithstanding the fact that they heartily agreed with him on the crowning issue of the day.

The proceedings were stormy. South Carolina sent no delegates.[4] For days the Convention planned and wrangled. Finally, when the balloting for the Presidential candidate began, twenty votes were cast for Douglas. On the thirty-first ballot, he received ninety-two votes. Some thought that the brilliant young leader [5] would be chosen. But, on the thirty-fifth ballot, Virginia entered a 'dark Horse,' General Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, by throwing fifteen votes to him; [6] and on the forty-ninth ballot, the Convention broke for him amid the customary tremendous cheering, nominating him by a practically unanimous vote.[7] Instantly Douglas congratulated the Convention and 'the Democratic party. . . . Illinois will give Franklin

[1] Thos. D. Harris to Cobb, May 28, 1852. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 298.

[2] Toombs was certain that this would be done. 'The Democratic convention will unquestionably adopt the Compromise by a great majority. It will be full, fair, and explicit. . . . Even the fire-eaters are whipped on this point.' Toombs to Cobb, May 27, 1852. *Ib.*, 297–8.

[3] 'Douglas is not much spoken of; but I shall be afraid to the last lest he be nominated.' Thos. D. Harris to Cobb, May 28, 1852. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 298–9. 'Today [December, 1851] Douglas has by far the best chance of a nomination.' Greeley writing from Washington in New York *Tribune*, as quoted in *Ottawa Free Trader*, Dec. 27, 1851.

Douglas himself was very active. 'Prospects look well and are improving every day. If two or three western States will speak out in my favor the battle is over.' Let Illinois send a big delegation. Yet only eleven delegates from Illinois attended. *Douglas:* Johnson, 203–4.

[4] *National Intelligencer*, June 12, 1852. Wilson, II, 364–6.

[5] Douglas was then thirty-nine years old. [6] *National Intelligencer*, June 12, 1852.

[7] *Ib.* He received 282 votes to six for all others. The *Illinois State Register* throughout the year printed extracts from Democratic papers and accounts of Democratic meetings for Douglas.

When Douglas was not nominated, the Whig press tried the familiar device of arousing the anger of his friends: 'The friends of Judge Douglas are deeply disappointed;' and no wonder, for Douglas was a fine man. *Illinois Journal*, June 7, 1852.

'We heard more hard swearing and saw more wry faces among Democrats than it has

Pierce a larger majority than any other State in the Union.' [1] William R. King of Alabama was chosen as the candidate for Vice President.

The platform was made up of several planks from former party pronouncements, and declared for economy, against monopolies, against a National Bank, and against laws hindering foreigners from becoming citizens and land owners. The doctrine of States' rights was affirmed, Abolitionists were denounced by name as enemies of the Union and of public peace, and the Compromise of 1850 was endorsed, including specifically the Fugitive Slave Law. The party pledged itself to 'resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made.' [2]

Ten days after the Democratic Convention adjourned, the Whigs met at the same place. Even before they assembled, watchful politicians declared it to be 'a fixed fact' that General Winfield Scott would be nominated.[3] The prediction was fulfilled, but only after a prolonged struggle, the South voting steadily for Fillmore. Scott was chosen on the fifty-third ballot by one hundred and fifty-nine votes, an even dozen more than were necessary to a choice. William A. Graham of North Carolina was named for Vice President.[4]

While Lincoln wrote the call for the Illinois Whig State Convention in December, 1851,[5] it is not certain that he attended the National Whig Convention. But his friend, Elihu B. Washburne, was there.[6] Also, through conference and correspondence

ever been our fate to hear and see before. It was "terrible to behold."' *Jacksonville Constitutionalist*, June 12, 1852.

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 205. [2] McKee, 75–7.

[3] George W. Jones to Cobb, Washington, June 13, 1852. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 301–2.

'The Scott men are very confident. . . . I have kept quiet in order not to alarm the scoundrels [Southern Fillmore Whigs, who might go to Scott], that they may carry out their treachery. . . . Scott's nomination cannot embarrass us. . . . That of Fillmore, with a reputation in favor of the Compromise, would.' Toombs to Cobb, May 27, 1852. *Ib.*, 297–8.

[4] The Southern Whigs were for Fillmore. *National Intelligencer*, July 10, 1852.

[5] *Works*, II, 154. This call was signed by a large number of Whigs, among them being Stuart, Gillespie, Washburne, and Browning. Lincoln's name heads the list.

[6] Washburne's speech in the House, April 5, 1854. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 462.

with active Whig politicians all over the country during the Taylor campaign, Lincoln was better known to members of the Convention than any other Whig in Illinois, was recognized as a practical politician, skilled and resourceful in the art of political management. So he was made the Illinois member of the National Whig Committee[1] and served throughout the campaign of 1852.

Except in its declarations for internal improvements and a protective tariff, the Whig platform was almost a copy of that adopted by the Democrats. It, too, declared for States' rights, economy, and the Compromise of 1850 which, the platform asserted, was a 'settlement in principle and substance of the dangerous and exciting questions' arising from slavery. 'We deprecate all further agitation of the questions thus settled as dangerous to our peace . . . and we will maintain the system [Compromise of 1850] as essential to the nationality of the Whig party and the integrity of the Union.' The Fugitive Slave Law was endorsed by name.[2]

While the Whigs were thus duplicating the Democratic pronouncement on slavery and the Great Compromise, a grim event was happening forty miles away. In his room at the National Hotel at Washington, Henry Clay lay dying. Only his son and a negro servant were at his bedside. Cheers for Scott, when the capital learned of his nomination, disturbed the stricken old leader.[3] Hardly had the Whig delegates from distant States reached their homes, when news of his death flashed over the country. Everywhere bells tolled and flags hung at half mast. Not since the death of Washington had mourning been so general and poignant; it was more widespread even than the sorrow that followed that of Marshall.

For weeks memorial meetings were held and orations delivered throughout the whole Nation. On July 16 the citizens

[1] *National Intelligencer*, June 26, 1852.

[2] McKee, 77–80. The Whig platform was reported by George Ashmun of Massachusetts (*National Intelligencer*, June 26, 1852), Lincoln's associate in the House, who was to be Chairman of the Republican National Convention at Chicago in 1860 that nominated Lincoln for President. The plank approving the Fugitive Slave Law was said to have been written by Webster. Wilson, II, 368.

[3] Poore, I, 418–9.

of Springfield gathered at the State House to do honor to the memory of the dead statesman, and Lincoln addressed them upon the life and character of the hero of his youth and the idol of his young manhood. This speech is worthy of mention only because Lincoln delivered it, and because it reveals, vaguely and without emphasis, his opinions on slavery more than twenty years after the abolition assault began.

'The nation has passed its perils, and it is free, prosperous, and powerful,' he began. The sectional dispute of 1820, adjusted by the Missouri Compromise, 'sprang from that unfortunate source of discord — negro slavery. . . . This alarmed thinking men more than any previous question, because, unlike all the former, it divided the country by geographical lines.'

Lincoln quoted most of Jefferson's famous letter on the Missouri controversy: 'I considered it at once as the knell of the Union.' But thanks to 'his inventive genius,' said Lincoln, Clay had found a way out. Thereafter everybody regarded him 'as the man for a crisis.' So it was that, in 1850, Clay became the architect of the Great Compromise.

Although himself a slave-holder, Clay always had opposed slavery 'on principle and in feeling;' but, declared Lincoln, 'he did not perceive, as I think no wise man has perceived, how it could be at once eradicated without producing a greater evil even to the cause of human liberty itself.' So Clay had been against both extremes.

This, too, was his own position, Lincoln said. 'Those who would shiver into fragments the Union of these States, tear to tatters its now venerated Constitution, and even burn the last copy of the Bible, rather than slavery should continue a single hour, together with all their more halting sympathizers, have received, and are receiving, their just execration; and the name and opinions and influence of Mr. Clay are fully and, as I trust, effectually and enduringly arrayed against them.'

But severe as Lincoln was upon Abolitionists, he was no less so 'against the opposite extreme — against a few but an increasing number of men who, for the sake of perpetuating slavery, are beginning to assail and to ridicule the white man's

charter of freedom, the declaration that "all men are created free and equal."' Calhoun was the first to do this, Lincoln averred, and the allegation had been reiterated by the Governor of South Carolina. 'We, however, look for and are not much shocked by political eccentricities and heresies in South Carolina.'

Lincoln quoted from a published letter of a Virginia clergyman who said the 'free and equal' clause of the Declaration of Independence was not in the Bible — the minister had 'never seen two men of whom it is true.' Such a sentiment 'sounds strangely in Republican America,' exclaimed Lincoln. 'The like was not heard in the fresher days of the republic.' Contrast it with Clay's speech to the Colonization Society in 1827. That organization did not propose to abolish slavery, but only to send free negroes to Liberia; yet the movement toward 'ultimate emancipation' could not be suppressed. Clay 'considered it no demerit in the society that it tended to relieve the slaveholders from the troublesome presence of the free negroes.'

Clay's assertion that 'there is a moral fitness in the idea of returning to Africa her children, whose ancestors have been torn from her by the ruthless hand of fraud and violence,' pleased Lincoln. The negroes would take with them 'religion, civilization, law, and liberty,' Clay had said, and thus 'transform an original crime into a signal blessing.'

Lincoln thought that idea very fine. 'May it indeed be realized.' If 'by any means,' he added, the country could be relieved of 'the dangerous presence of slavery, and at the same time, the negroes could be restored to their long-lost fatherland with bright prospects for the future, and this too so gradually that neither races nor individuals shall have suffered by the change, it will indeed be a glorious consummation.' [1]

His views thus expressed on abolitionism, slavery, and the exportation of free negroes to Africa, and his duty discharged to the memory of the great Whig leader, Lincoln turned with a strange and curious eagerness to politics. Without issues between the two old parties and with a military 'hero' as the presidential candidate of each of them, the campaign languor-

[1] *Works*, II, 155–77.

ously began.[1] Many Illinois Whigs were dissatisfied with the Baltimore platform and proposed to repudiate it at the State Convention held early in July. But the leaders decreed that it must be accepted, Fugitive Slave Law plank and all; and, accordingly, Lincoln's partner introduced a resolution of endorsement.[2]

On July 9 Douglas spoke at a Democratic ratification meeting at Richmond, held in the African Church, the largest hall in the Virginia Capital. He made a rousing stump speech three hours long, to a crowd that filled floor, galleries, aisles, doors, and windows. Applause, laughter, cheers greeted every point, almost every sentence.[3] Since Lincoln made answer to it, in the strangest written and published utterance of his life, Douglas's Richmond performance requires brief notice.

Pierce was brave and patriotic, the Whigs were base and craven for insinuating that he was a coward, Douglas said. Scott was a fine soldier, but why 'CONVERT A GOOD GENERAL INTO A BAD PRESIDENT?' His nomination was sectional, for half of the States in the Whig Convention voted against him more than fifty times — an ominous circumstance, the first sectional choice of a presidential candidate ever made.

The Whigs had stolen from the Democrats the plank on slavery, and in his letter of acceptance Scott had faced two ways upon it: 'I accept the nomination *with* the resolutions annexed.' At the South Whigs could say that their candidate accepted *with* his 'approval' of the platform; at the North that he accepted '*notwithstanding*' the platform. 'General Seward,' not General Scott must have devised that crooked language. Think, too, of the extravagance of the Whig Administration, its ineptitude, its weakness. Taylor's death was providential. Fillmore was no statesman. Scott was even worse.

When Douglas closed, 'tremendous and long-continued applause' rang through the African Church and out upon the streets of Richmond, a vote of thanks was given, and the meet-

[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne, a college classmate of Pierce, wrote a campaign *Life* of Pierce and Greeley did the same thing for Scott. Both were commonplace.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, July 15, 1852.

[3] *Washington Union*, July 18, 1852.

ing was adjourned with nine rousing cheers for 'THE YOUNG GIANT OF THE WEST.' [1]

Douglas's speech, with inserts of 'great cheering,' 'tremendous applause,' and the like, was printed in the *Illinois State Register* which proclaimed it as 'the Great Richmond Speech of Judge Douglas.' Lincoln read it and at the first opportunity answered it. So impatient was he, indeed, that he asked the Scott Club of Springfield to let him make reply to the Democratic chieftain. This organization was like the Taylor Club which Lincoln had directed Herndon to organize in the previous campaign.

On Saturday night, August 14, 1852, the Scott Club held one of its infrequent meetings; and, after another speaker, Tompkins Bush, who had been invited to speak, had excused himself because of illness, Lincoln proceeded to address his fellow partisans in the Court House, which was dimly illuminated by the half-light of tallow candles.

It was at his 'own special request,' began Lincoln, that the Club had given him permission to speak. The Richmond speech reminded Lincoln of former times 'when Judge Douglas was not so much greater man than all the rest of us, as he now is,' and Lincoln wanted so much to answer it that, he repeated, he was 'prompted . . . to seek the privilege' of doing so before the Scott Club.

Lincoln summarized Douglas's charges and said that he had more than insinuated that Seward controlled Scott and 'that abolitionism is controlling the whole Whig party' — an intolerable suggestion. The attempt to exalt the Democratic candidate as a military hero was 'simply ludicrous,' considering his record; and 'the free merry people of the country have laughed at it, and will continue to laugh at it, in spite of the querulous scolding of Judge Douglas.'

The Whigs had not stolen the Democratic plank on slavery. 'I had understood and now understand, as the indelibly written history of the country, that the compromise measures [of 1850] were not party measures — that for praise or blame, they be-

[1] *Richmond Enquirer*, July 11; *Washington Union*, July 18; *Illinois State Register*, Aug. 5, 1852. Also pamphlet, Richmond, 1852.

longed to neither party to the exclusion of the other; but that the chief leaders in the origin and adoption were Whigs and not Democrats.' Clay was the originator, and he and Webster the 'most efficient supporters' of the Compromise.

Douglas had been assailed in Chicago in the fall of 1850, Lincoln said, but had made a speech there which 'gave him a triumph most complete.' Lincoln had twice read that speech of Douglas, hastily, he admitted; and 'I do not now remember seeing anything in it to condemn. . . . The reading of it afforded me a good deal of pleasure, . . . if he had stolen none of the ideas of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, and other Whigs, which he had been listening to for the last preceding six or eight months, he might not have been able to get up quite so creditable a speech at Chicago as he did.' [1]

Scott's nomination was not sectional, as Douglas had charged, because, Lincoln argued, even if Southern delegates did 'not vote for Scott, does it follow, in the sense the Judge would have us to understand, that they voted against Scott? If so, then, by the same rule, in the Democratic Convention every delegation, North and South, voted against Gen. Pierce thirty-four times.' This argument was repeated and prolonged; and Lincoln made a mathematical analysis of votes on platform and candidates in the Whig Convention, to refute Douglas's assertion.

'What wonderful acumen the Judge displays on the construction of language!!!' Lincoln exclaimed, in ridicule of Douglas's reference to Scott's inept letter of acceptance. 'When the builders of the tower of Babel got into difficulty about language,

[1] Douglas's Chicago speech of 1850, which Lincoln thus endorsed so emphatically, was made to a hostile audience. He championed the right of the people of the Territories to decide for themselves all domestic questions including that of slavery; and he made many of the same arguments advanced by him in the Kansas-Nebraska debate described in this chapter.

But by far the greater part of Douglas's speech was a defence — indeed an advocacy — of the Fugitive Slave Law. At the close of his address the audience, without a dissenting vote adopted resolutions in favor of the Constitution, the Compromise of 1850, and particularly the Fugitive Slave Law.

Next night the Chicago Common Council, by a vote of twelve to one, rescinded its resolution against the Fugitive Slave Law; and at its first session thereafter, the Legislature of Illinois repealed its instructions to Douglas and Shields to oppose the bill.

For Douglas's Chicago speech of 1850, resolutions adopted by the meeting, and action of the City Council, see Flint (speeches), 3–30; Sheahan, 168–86.

if they had just called on Judge Douglas, he would, at once, have construed away the difficulty, and enabled them to finish the structure, upon the truly Democratic platform on which they were building.' By the Douglas method Moses' statement that 'Enoch walked *with* God,' would mean that Enoch walked 'notwithstanding God.' Imagine Douglas analyzing that statement in Richmond; he would 'thrill, and electrify, and throw into spasms of ecstasy his African Church auditors by suggesting that such monstrous duplicity could not have been conceived by Enoch or Moses, but must have been dictated by Gen. Seward!!!'

Spoken in Lincoln's thin falsetto voice and quizzical manner, the official minutes of the meeting inform us that such passages 'elicited shouts of laughter.' When Lincoln made an end of the first half of his speech, the Club adjourned, 'with three loud cheers for Scott and Graham,' to meet two weeks later and hear the remainder of Lincoln's exposure of Douglas.[1]

During that fortnight the Springfield and Chicago papers printed full accounts of the most important event, historically speaking, that took place in America in the summer of 1852, but which both old parties, particularly the Whigs, ignored. That event was the National Free-Soil Democratic Convention held at Pittsburgh August 11. The Chairman, Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, made an abolition speech: 'Hasten the day when the humblest slave . . . can stand up and say, "I am a man, a brother, a freeman."' [2] John P. Hale of New Hampshire and George W. Julian of Indiana were nominated as the Free-Soil standard bearers. Amid storms of cheers the Free-Soilers adopted their party creed. This platform was written by Chase.[3] It had in it the ring of the Declaration of Independence and announced principles which were to prevail only at the cost of civil war.

Nobody was bound to observe the Fugitive Slave Law, the Free-Soilers asserted, since it was repugnant to the Constitution, to Christianity, and to the common law. Yet it must be repealed immediately. The 'Compromise' of 1850 was no com-

[1] *Illinois Weekly Journal,* Aug. 18, 1852. [2] Wilson, II, 373.
[3] *Private Life and Public Services of Salmon P. Chase:* Robert B. Warden. 338.

promise at all. For it was wrong and futile, especially in its enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law and its 'omission to guarantee freedom to the territories' — an important assertion, as will presently appear. It was un-American and 'dangerous to the liberties of the people' to say that any legislation was final, as the Whig and Democratic platforms claimed the Compromise of 1850 to be — a statement, the sincerity of which Douglas was soon to test.

The Free-Soil answer to the demands of the 'Slave Power' was: 'No more slave States, no slave Territory, no nationalized slavery, and no national legislation for the extradition of slaves.' For, asserted those determined enthusiasts of freedom, 'slavery is a sin against God, and a crime against man, . . . and Christianity, humanity, and patriotism alike demand its abolition.' The party adopted Sumner's motto: 'Slavery is sectional and freedom national.' The General Government must have nothing to do with the accursed institution.

Not only must men be free but the soil also; for 'all men have a natural right to a portion of the soil' — a right which is 'as sacred as their right to life itself.' Therefore the public domain must not be sold to individuals nor bestowed upon corporations,[1] but instead 'granted in limited quantities, free of cost, to landless settlers.'

The old parties were 'hopelessly corrupt' and the Free-Soilers intended to beat them both. In a sentence like the blast of bugles sounding the charge, they again condensed their principles of 1848: 'We inscribe on our banner, Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men, and under it will fight on and fight ever, until a triumphant victory shall reward our exertions.' [2]

Here, at last, was an issue indeed, an issue that later flamed to the skies. But Whigs and Democrats alike were blind to it.

[1] Meaning land grants to railroads.

[2] *History of the Presidency*, Stanwood, 253–6; McKee, 80–3. The Free-Soilers also favored arbitration treaties for the settlement of international disputes, recognition of the independence of Haiti, and insisted upon American protest against the 'intervention of Kings and Emperors' to prevent the establishment of republics.

This pronouncement was in response to the appeals of Kossuth, who was then touring the United States demanding American support of the Hungarian revolution — an incident that aroused great resentment and brought out heated and able speeches in Congress. See *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess.

Springfield was oblivious to it. Except for Herndon and a few like radicals, nobody in the Illinois capital paid any attention to the Free-Soil declaration, unless, indeed, a disgusted old line partisan sneered or swore at it.

In this political situation and state of local public temper, Lincoln returned to his attack on Douglas. On the night of August 25, the Scott Club again met in the Court House and Lincoln delivered the second half of his carefully prepared speech.

He took a good deal of time in reply to Douglas as to the relative merits of Scott and Pierce, with a fling at Shields. The Democrats praised Pierce for having 'given a strange boy a cent to buy candy with.' What generosity! When seventeen years old Pierce had taught his father how to spell the word 'but.' How else would the 'old dad' have spelled that difficult word? Then Lincoln emitted a passage which is typical of his campaign method in his forty-fourth year, and which, although exaggerated stump buffoonery, is a clever if coarse satire on the pomposity of frontier militia musters.

The Democrats 'remember how our own "militia trainings" have been "laughed to death" by fantastic parades and caricatures upon them. We remember one of these parades ourselves here, at the head of which, on horse-back, figured our old friend Gordon Abrams, with a pine-wood sword, about nine feet long, and a paste-board cocked hat, from front to rear about the length of an ox-yoke, and very much the shape of one turned bottom upwards; and with spurs having rowels as large as the bottom of a teacup, and shanks a foot and a half long. That was the last militia muster here. Among the rules and regulations, no man is to wear more than five pounds of cod-fish for epaulets, or more than thirty yards of bologna sausages for a sash; and no two men are to dress alike, and if any two should dress alike the one that dresses most alike is to be fined. (I forget how much.) Flags they had too, with devices and mottoes, one of which latter is, "We'll fight till we run, and we'll run till we die."

'Now in the language of Judge Douglas, "I submit to you gentlemen," whether there is not great cause to fear that on

some occasion when Gen. Scott suspects no danger, suddenly Gen. Pierce will be discovered charging upon him, holding a huge roll of candy in one hand for a spy-glass; with B–U–T labelled on some appropriate part of his person; with Abrams' long pine sword cutting in the air at imaginary cannon balls, and calling out "boys there's a game of ball for you" and over all streaming the flag, with the motto, 'We'll fight till we faint, and I'll treat when its over."'

The Club thought this vastly funny and laughed uproariously, we are told.

Douglas, Lincoln continued, looked upon Taylor's death as 'a special interference of Providence, against the people, and in favor of Locofocoism.[1] . . . I suspect that confidence [in Providence] is not more firmly fixed with the Judge than it was with the old woman, whose horse ran away with her in a buggy. She said she trusted in Providence till the britchen broke; and then she didn't know what on airth *to* do. The chance is the Judge will see the breechen (*sic*) break [by Scott's election], and then he can at his leisure, bewail the fate of Locofocoism, as the victim of misplaced confidence.'

For several hundred words Lincoln replied to Douglas's contemptuous reference to Fillmore. 'O ho! Judge; it is you, is it, that thinks a man should furnish *proofs of superiority of statesmanship*, before he is looked to as a candidate for the first office?' Well, what proofs had Frank Pierce shown? The fact that Fillmore had 'done no harm' ought to please Douglas — for look at the Democratic platform. It proposed nothing at all, except to raise enough money by a revenue tariff to pay official salaries, 'including perhaps, constructive mileage to Senators.'

But 'propose a course of policy that shall ultimately supplant the monstrous folly of bringing untold millions of iron, thousands of miles across water and land, which [when] our own hills and mountains are groaning with the best quality in the world, and in quantity sufficient for ten such worlds, and the cry instantly is "no." Propose to remove a snag, a rock, or a sand bar from a lake or river, and the cry still is "no."'

[1] A name applied in 1835 to the equal rights or radical faction of the Democratic Party in New York and afterwards used generally to describe any Democrat.

Lincoln read from a 'democratic Battle Hymn' which he said he had seen in 'a dirty little democratic issue:'

> 'Sturdy and strong, we march along,
> Millions on millions of freemen bold;
> Raising the dead, with our iron tread —
> The noble dead, of the days of old!'

Let the poet tell the people whether, among those '"noble dead" . . . there were any from the hulls of flats and keels, and brigs, and steam boats, which had gone to the bottom on questions of constitutionality.'

The *National Intelligencer*, said Lincoln, was 'a paper which is not often misled and never intentionally misleads others,' and he quoted a great deal from the national Whig organ to show that public expenditures under the Whig administration had not been as large as Douglas had asserted: 'Judge Douglas is only mistaken about twenty-five millions of dollars — a mere trifle for a giant!'

The Democrats would not tell the real reason for their hatred of Seward. The only specific charge made against him was his announced doctrine of a 'higher law.' Lincoln had not read that speech, he said, and could not 'judge its import and purpose' — so he could only say this: 'In so far as it [Seward's higher law pronouncement] may attempt to foment a disobedience to the Constitution, or to the Constitutional laws of the country, it has my unqualified condemnation.'

But said Lincoln, the real cause of Democratic animosity toward Seward was that the Whig leader might carry New York for Scott. The Free-Soil organization was now broken up, and its votes 'are the stakes for which the game in New York is being played. If Scott can get nine thousand of them he carries the State, and is elected;' while Pierce must get nearly all in order to win. 'Standing in the way of this Seward is thought to be the greatest obstacle. . . . Hence their [Democrats'] insane malice against him.' [1]

This, too, Lincoln said, explained the nomination of Pierce. According to two newspaper reports, never denied by the Demo-

[1] The Democrats called Seward the 'Field Marshal of the Scott Forces.' *Washington Union*, Oct. 3, 1852.

cratic candidate, Pierce had declared publicly some six months before the Convention his loathing for the Fugitive Slave Law. Of course the delegates knew this, and that was why they chose Pierce — to capture the Free-Soil vote of New York.

Lincoln closed his long and elaborate reply to Douglas thus: 'Why, Pierce's only chance for the presidency, is to be born into it, as a cross between New York old hunkerism, and free soilism, the latter predominating in the offspring. Marryat, in some one of his books, describes the sailors, weighing anchor, and singing:

"Sally is a bright Mullatter,
Oh Sally Brown —
Pretty gal, but can't get at her,
Oh Sally Brown."

'Now, should Pierce ever be President, he will, politically speaking, not only be a mulatto; but he will be a good deal darker one than Sally Brown.' [1]

The minutes of the Scott Club, August 25, 1852, make note that Lincoln concluded on that night and that the Club asked him 'to prepare a copy of his speech for publication. . . . Adjourned with three deafening cheers for SCOTT and GRAHAM.' [2] The fact that he discussed none of the real and very grave questions of the day is not more strange than his statement, twice made, that he asked the Scott Club to be allowed to make the speech at all.

What further part Lincoln took in the campaign does not appear.[3] We know only that, as the Illinois member of the National Whig Committee, he had charge of the party's for-

[1] *Illinois Daily Journal*, issues of Sept. 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, and 21, 1852. The speech is omitted from all published *Works* of Lincoln.

The caption before each section of the speech in the six separate issues of the Whig organ is:

HON. A. LINCOLN'S ADDRESS,
Before the Springfield Scott Club, in reply to Judge DOUGLAS' *Richmond Speech. (Published by desire of the Club.)*

[2] *Illinois Daily Journal*, Aug. 30, 1852.

[3] In Lincoln's *Works* is printed an opinion on the rights of 'challenged voters;' but this short and formal document seems to have been non-partisan, since it was signed by Democrats as well as Whigs. *Works*, II, 177–8.

tunes in that State during the Presidential contest of 1852. Not the least curious of the mystifying circumstances that confront and puzzle the student of Lincoln's public activities is the strange fact that none of his letters or other writings during the year that he was the Illinois member of the National Whig Committee, have been published or are even known to have existed.[1] But the Whig Party was moribund and just before his death, which occurred during the campaign, Webster declared that after the election it would be known 'only in history.'[2]

The campaign droned along.[3] The Free-Soilers and Abolitionists were fiery and vociferous; but neither Whigs nor Democrats displayed keen interest. Clamor against slavery seemed to be repugnant to the popular mind which apparently wanted nothing so much as banishment of that subject from national politics.

Among Democratic leaders only Douglas showed much spirit, and he spoke all over the country for the Democratic ticket.[4] Thus he came into direct contact with more people in more places than any other man of any party, and learned at first hand the state of public feeling. Of consequence, and from his own disposition and judgment, he afterwards declared in the Senate that he had resolved never to make another speech on the slavery question.

So election day dawned in an atmosphere of serene apathy. The strident cries of Free-Soil and Abolition orators for liberty and the rights of man had fallen on deaf ears and echoed hollowly from brazen and unresponsive skies. Pierce achieved one of the notable election triumphs of American history.[5] The

[1] The hiatus in the steady flow of Lincoln's letters, articles, and speeches is rendered more provoking by the omission of the Scott Club speech from all collections of Lincoln's writings.

With the exception of the Clay eulogy and short non-partisan legal opinion on the election law signed by Lincoln and three other lawyers, the important year of 1852 is a blank in Lincoln's published *Works*.

[2] Wilson, II, 375.

[3] *New York Herald* and *Louisville Journal*, clipped in *Washington Union*, Sept. 24, 1852.

[4] *Douglas:* Johnson, 207.

[5] Pierce's popular plurality over Scott was nearly two hundred and fifteen thousand; and his majority over both Whig and Free-Soil candidates was only a little less than sixty thousand. Scott carried but four states, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Tennessee,

Free-Soil Party was shattered beyond recovery.[1] Northern Whigs must now see that 'free-soil don't pay any better at the North than at the South,' wrote Toombs to Crittenden. 'The nation, with singular unanimity, has determined to take a man without claims or qualifications, surrounded by as dishonest and dirty a lot of political gamesters as ever Catiline assembled, rather than the canting hypocrites who brought out Gen. Scott.' No party deserved to live if it was not national; see how 'the motley crew . . . under the name of the Democracy' had triumphed merely because of its 'standard of nationality.'[2]

The *Illinois Journal*,[3] the Whig organ of that State which always expressed Lincoln's opinions, gave a different explanation of the rout of that party. Fillmore men thought that his administration had showed 'patriotism, purity, talent' and believed that he would have been elected 'by acclamation;' and they resented Scott's nomination. Moreover 'every ISM was against them [the Whigs] — Free-Soilism, Abolitionism, Native Americanism, Secessionism, Free Public Landism, . . . in [a] word, all the little factions in the country.'

In Illinois the Democratic gain was unprecedented, Pierce receiving over twenty-four thousand more votes than the number cast for Cass four years earlier. The Whigs also increased their vote by nearly eleven thousand, but this was about thirteen thousand less than the Democratic gain. The Free-Soil strength shrank from almost sixteen thousand in 1848 to scarcely ten thousand in 1852.

Very decidedly Illinois held out little to encourage aspiring Whig or Free-Soil politicians. For them the prairie skies were lowering during the winter of 1852–53; and spring, summer, and

and Vermont, with a total electoral vote of forty-two, while Pierce swept the remainder of the Union with a representation of two hundred and fifty-four in the electoral college.

[1] Its heaviest loss was in New York where it cast about ninety-five thousand fewer votes than in the preceding presidential campaign; but Free-Soil defection was general. For example, that party declined about two thousand in Connecticut, four thousand in Maine, ten thousand in Massachusetts, four thousand in Ohio, six thousand in Illinois, three thousand in Michigan, five thousand in Vermont, one thousand in Indiana, where the Free-Soil candidate for Vice-President lived, and an equal number in New Hampshire, the home of the head of the ticket.

[2] Toombs to Crittenden, Dec. 15, 1852. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 322.

[3] Nov. 19, 1852.

autumn brought them no fair weather. Lincoln stated only a coldly practical fact when, eight years later, he said that, at the period under review, he 'was beginning to lose interest in politics.' Democratic dominance was overwhelming and the Democratic future rosy. Douglas was supreme in his own State, was reëlected to the Senate without opposition, and loomed larger and was more attractive than ever as a national figure.

In fact, the year 1852 marks the beginning of one of the most important developments in the whole course of American history — a development which became an essential and integral part of Lincoln's career. In that development one great historic political party disappeared as a national organization, and a sectional party took its place; the national scope of the other great historic political party shrank to sectional dimensions.

Under different names, these two fundamental political divisions had always separated the American people on economic and governmental issues common to the entire country. Whigs in Virginia believed the same things as Whigs in Massachusetts; Democrats in Georgia agreed with Democrats in Iowa. Thus those two parties had been powerful forces in weaving the people into a nation. But in 1852 one of those forces collapsed, and the other began to contract and lose strength.[1] Henceforward, gradually, yet swiftly as history runs, sectionalism in government assumed that sway over American politics which persists to this day.

However, the election of 1852 showed that any future political organization hostile to Democracy must be built mostly of Whig materials on Whig foundations — Whig economic traditions, protective tariffs, internal improvements, sound finance, 'good business.' Of course Free-Soilers, Abolitionists, Know-Nothings, and all other groups antagonistic to the ruling political power, must also be used; but these would give spirit and color rather than substance and numbers to the new party of the future. When that new party appeared and after Lincoln finally joined it, we shall hear him describe these and other ele-

[1] For a thorough treatment of the effect of parties upon the evolution of the American people, see 'The Nationalizing Influence of Party:' Allen Johnson. *Yale Review*, xv (1907), 283–92.

ments with pungent fidelity. Necessarily the new party would be sectional, and we shall now follow the events that developed it.

In the mid-winter of 1853 the first blow that ever had shaken his fierce, proud spirit fell upon Douglas. Six years earlier he had married Martha Denny Martin, daughter of Colonel Robert Martin, a prosperous planter of North Carolina.[1] Douglas's love for his beautiful wife amounted to infatuation and his devotion increased throughout their married life. On January 23, 1853, Mrs. Douglas died. Overwhelmed with grief, Douglas sought solace in travel.[2] On May 14, having installed his sister in charge of his house, he sailed for Europe.

When he went abroad his party was seemingly in fine condition. He returned early in November to find it torn by feuds, without definite policies, filled with discouragement. Although Pierce was extremely popular in Washington — the best liked, personally, of any President up to that time, as an experienced newspaper correspondent declared — and although he was an upright man of good ability, he had proved more inept even than Polk in the delicate art of dealing with men, and by unskilful distribution of patronage had wrecked his party in New York and created factions in other States.[3]

Promptly Douglas set about the difficult labor of rehabilitating the national Democracy. He was the outstanding Democrat of the day, the ablest man in his party, aggressive, brilliant, daring; and he was the idol of the new generation which burned with ardor for expansion, development, and progress.

In a letter to his intimate political and personal friend, Charles H. Lanphier, editor of the *Illinois State Register*, organ of the Democracy of that State, Douglas outlined his program. The surplus, and therefore the tariff, must be reduced to prevent business upheaval; the river and harbor problem solved; the

[1] For an entertaining account of Douglas's first marriage see *Douglas:* Johnson, 145–9. Colonel Martin owned a plantation and about 150 slaves in Mississippi which he offered to Douglas, who refused; and, by his will, Colonel Martin gave his Mississippi lands and slaves to his daughter and her children, if she should have any, and, if not, the slaves were to be freed and sent to Liberia. Colonel Martin died within a year. In this fashion Douglas was afterward assailed, as we shall see, by political enemies for being a 'slave holder.' Two sons were born of this marriage.

[2] *Douglas:* Johnson, 208; Stevens, 637. [3] Poore, I, 428–9.

Pacific Railroad built by private enterprise, aided by land grants as in the case of the Illinois Central, 'but not a dollar from the National Treasury.'

The Democratic press was beginning to declare again for Douglas for President in 1856, but he rejected the idea. 'I do not wish to occupy that position [of a prospective candidate]. I do not think I will be willing to have my name used. I think such a state of things will exist that I shall not desire the nomination. . . . The party is in a distracted condition and it requires all our wisdom, prudence and energy to consolidate its power and perpetuate its principles. Let us leave the Presidency out of view for at least two years to come.' [1]

Such were Douglas's first hasty views on his return from Europe. Soon after he wrote this notable letter, the Administration organ in Washington declared that the principal subjects before the Congress about to convene would be the organization of Nebraska and the building of the Pacific Railroad.[2] Events had marched swiftly in the United States during his absence, and, as had been the case for a decade, they had continued to march toward the Great West — the land of Douglas's dreams and plans, almost of his affections.

Since 1849 the effect of the discovery of gold in California had worked an economic miracle throughout America. Prices had risen, prosperity bloomed. The increased price of cotton had had much to do with assuaging Southern irritation and effecting the Compromise of 1850. But the enchantment of the Western sands and mountains had wrought a marvel far greater than the stimulation of enterprise and business. The American instinct for expansion, for the occupancy of new countries, for adventure, for imagined gain, was aroused, strengthened, and became almost a frenzy. By sea and overland thronged scores of thousands of seekers for fortune in the golden West.

Across that tremendous expanse called the Nebraska country, stretching from Missouri and Iowa to the Rockies, crept long trains of covered wagons laden with the families and household

[1] Douglas to Lanphier, Nov. 11, 1853. MS. in possession of William L. Patton, of Springfield, Ill.

[2] *Washington Union*, Nov. 26 and Dec. 3, 1853, as quoted in *Douglas:* Johnson, 228.

goods of prospective settlers. For those emigrants from the older States were not allured by gold alone, but even more by lust for land, and they meant to stay on the Pacific slope. People of the younger States joined the movement to the West. When Lincoln came home after his first session in Congress, scarcely a town or hamlet in Illinois but was sending men and families to join the long caravans plodding across the plains toward the sunset.[1] Upon his return to Springfield when his term had expired, the exodus was still going on. Often, as he joked with companions in the Court House yard or on the narrow board sidewalks before the stores on the public square, Lincoln saw groups of emigrant wagons[2] lumbering through the mud of the slough-like streets. The fact that immense areas of fertile land and beautiful country in Illinois were still vacant, mattered not at all to these searchers for the unknown and fabulous.[3] Even in scantily settled Iowa the western fever raged.

New and vivid interest in Oregon, too, sprang up, and thousands of 'home-seekers' left good houses and farms[4] to get others in the wilds of that far-off Territory. All these hope-inspired processions to lands beyond the distant mountains, crept along the perilous trails, marked by skeletons of horses, mules, and cattle, stretching for a thousand miles across the

[1] 'The fever is extending and increasing. . . . [It] is affecting all classes, . . . young men, middle-aged and old alike.' *Quincy Whig*, Feb. 19, 1850.

'"All the world and *the rest of mankind*" are about leaving for California.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, March 16, 1850.

'On Fox River . . . the emigration will average one out of every six able bodied men. . . . In our own country . . . the proportion is yet fearfully large. . . . They are young, hale able bodied men, . . . who have an easy competence at home.' *Ib.*, March 23, 1850.

'From fifteen to twenty persons leave this town within the next few days for California, while three times as many go from the country around, among whom are some of our most estimable citizens.' *Rockford Forum*, March 20, 1850.

'25 wagons, each drawn by four horses, left here . . . for the long, and hazardous and laborious trip across the plains to California . . . . Each wagon bore the outfit of four emigrants.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, April 13, 1850.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, March 7, 1850. 'As many as three hundred teams have passed here [Springfield] this season.' *Ib.*

'We can scarcely look out of the windows but we see California trains, some drawn by oxen, some by horses, some by ponies, some by mules.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, March 23, 1850.

[3] *Ib.*, Jan. 31, 1852.

[4] Joseph B. Wells to French, Feb. 11, 1850. French MSS. *Quincy Whig*, Feb. 19, 1850.

Nebraska country.[1] Indian attacks and picturesque fights often broke the monotony of these journeys.

But other thousands of 'movers' did not essay expeditions so hazardous; instead they went to Iowa, to Wisconsin, anywhere, apparently, away from the place in which they were. People came to Illinois from adjacent States on the East; people left Illinois for adjacent States on the West.[2] It was another of those folk movements that made and mark American territorial expansion.

Thus it happened that the attractiveness of the grass-covered, flower bedecked prairies beyond the Missouri and Iowa boundaries became known to multitudes of the restless who sought a new abiding place. But they could not settle there because the country belonged to the Indians and stern penal laws, supported by soldiers, stood like an armored wall along the border.[3] In spite of this grim barrier, however, many had crossed the forbidden line and established 'trading posts.'[4]

When, in the winter of 1853–54, Douglas essayed the hard and intricate task of restoring alignment, discipline, and vigor to his party, more than twenty thousand intending settlers had collected on the Iowa and Missouri lines, waiting in grumbling and sour impatience for the establishment of a Territorial Government and the extinguishment of Indian titles, so that they could take possession of the coveted domain.[5] The press, generally, declared that the organization of Nebraska would be effected by the Congress about to assemble.[6]

Organization of Territories, the creation of States, the development of the West had long been the most cherished object of Douglas's life and now had become nothing short of a passion.[7] In the debate to which presently we are to listen, Senator Bell of

[1] *Joliet Signal*, Nov. 19, 1850.

[2] *Ib.*, June 5, 1849. The *Terre Haute* (Ind.) *Journal*, as quoted in the *Illinois State Register*, declared that, in the spring of 1853, emigrant wagons bound for Illinois were crossing the Wabash 'almost as fast as the ferry boats can carry them.'

[3] The law imposed a fine of $1,000 and six months' imprisonment for settling in the Indian country. Douglas, in Cutts, 87.

[4] 'Slavery in Nebraska:' Edson P. Rich, *Trans. Neb. State Hist. Socy.*, II, 94–5.

[5] Douglas, in Cutts, 91; *Repeal of the Missouri Compromise:* P. Orman Ray, 103–15.

[6] For citations from newspapers in Nov. and Dec., 1853, see *ib.*, 178–82, 188–9.

[7] *Douglas:* Johnson, 221.

Tennessee declared that it amounted to a 'mania.' [1] It was the hand of Douglas that had written the laws for the admission of Florida, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin, California, and for establishment of Territorial Governments in Oregon, Minnesota, Washington, Utah, and New Mexico. And here were the opportunity and occasion to finish his constructive work, thus making civil and civilized rule continuous throughout a continental Republic.

From the time he entered the House as a raw young Western Representative, the organization of Nebraska had been his favorite project. Time and again he had introduced bills for that purpose and had supported bills introduced by others.[2] But for one reason and another they had always failed. Southern opposition, which though languid had been firm, had been the principal barrier.[3]

For about the same length of time that Douglas had striven to organize Nebraska, the building of a railway to the Pacific had been urged,[4] and of this project Douglas became as ardent a champion as he was of the erection of Territories and States.[5] As we have seen, the construction of railroads was his favorite idea when, with Lincoln, he became a member of the Illinois Legislature; and his creation of the Illinois Central Railroad — for his work in behalf of that great enterprise amounted to the creation of it — was his chief pride throughout his tempestuous life.[6]

At previous sessions Pacific Railroad bills had been introduced

[1] P. 206, *infra.*

[2] Cutts, 87. One reason that influenced Douglas first to insist upon the organization of Nebraska and the protection of emigrant routes was that Oregon, open to the British by ocean approach and closed to us by the Indian country, was 'rapidly passing into the exclusive possession of the British Hudson Bay Fur Company.' *Ib.*, 86–7.

[3] *Douglas:* Johnson, 220–2.

[4] *The Union Pacific Railway,* etc.: John P. Davis, 35, *et seq.; Douglas:* Johnson, 222.

[5] *Life of Augustus Cæsar Dodge:* Louis Pelzer, 163.

[6] As early as 1845, Douglas had urged that land grants be made to Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois to aid the building of a railway from Lake Erie to the Missouri River via Chicago and Rock Island; and, at the same time, that Oregon and Nebraska should be organized so that the railroad could be extended to the Pacific.

Douglas's interest in the Pacific railroad grew with the years; for instance, he presided at a great railway convention held at St. Louis, Oct. 16, 1849. Davis, 39–40. By 1852 it was difficult in Illinois to 'keep politics from being absorbed in the railroad question.' Manly to French, May 4, 1852. French MSS.

in House and Senate, but had made no progress. Jefferson Davis, now Secretary of War, had ordered surveys and these were being made. During a Presidential journey to New York in July, 1853, Davis accompanied Pierce and had endorsed the project in a notable speech at Philadelphia, delivered with the President's approval.[1] The time had seemingly arrived when the Nation's dream of steam transportation by land to the Western Ocean could be realized — the Nation's dream and the Nation's passionate desire.[2]

The success of this vast conception was inextricably interwoven with the organization of Nebraska,[3] unless, indeed, an extreme Southern route, which Davis, of course, strongly favored, should be chosen.[4] It was a financial impossibility to build and operate a railroad across a thousand miles of waste and unproductive land, without freight or any kind of traffic, without stations, without water-tanks, without fuel deposits, without protection from Indian attacks and depredation.

Obviously civil government must be organized, Indian titles extinguished, the country thrown open, an industrious white population permitted to occupy it, if a railway was to be built and maintained across it. Conversely the railroad would help to people that mighty expanse.

[1] *Washington Union*, July 17, Aug. 4, 1853.

In a long editorial, the Administration organ said that Davis's advocacy of the building of the Pacific railroad was the chief feature of the Presidential trip to New York; *ib.*, July 25, 1853, and that necessity and the public demand would compel construction. *Ib.*, July 29, Aug. 4, 1853; and Philadelphia *North American*, clipped in *ib.*, Aug. 10, 1853.

[2] Davis, 37–42. On January 4, 1854, the day Douglas reported the territorial bill considered in this chapter, Senator William McKendree Gwin of California declared that 'no question of the present day approaches it [Pacific railway] in importance, or is more the subject of discussion throughout the country,' and his colleague, John B. Weller, asserted that the continuance of the Union depended upon the building of the road. 'Unless you make us, who stand upon the Pacific Ocean, feel that we are a part and parcel of the American family — it will be utterly impossible to preserve this Union.' *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 118–20.

[3] For full, detailed, and very careful analysis of the connection of the Pacific railway project with the organization of Nebraska, see 'Genesis of the Kansas-Nebraska Act;' Frank Haywood Hodder, *Proc. Wisconsin State Hist. Socy.*, 1912, 69–86.

Also see *Douglas:* Johnson, 222: *Washington Union*, Aug. 2, 10, Sept. 21, *et seq.*, 1853. The *New York Journal of Commerce* opposed any Pacific railroad. *Washington Union*, Aug. 9, 1853.

[4] The New York *Tribune* made a bitter attack on Davis's plan for a Pacific railroad because it contemplated the southern route to the exclusion of the northern or central route. *Washington Union*, Aug. 14, 1853. And see Davis, 58 and note.

To make that gigantic work possible was, perhaps, the strongest and most tangible argument for the establishment of a Territorial Government over the country through which the most direct, practical, and advantageous routes for the Pacific railway must go. Yet the railway situation was complicated and intricate. Conflicting influences, financial, political, and sectional, favored or opposed different routes. Certain shipping and other interests did not want any overland railroad whatever.[1]

Although that great project was a dominant motive for the organization of Territorial Government over the Nebraska country, it had to be kept in the background while any bill for that purpose was being piloted through Congress. It placed Douglas in a special difficulty, since he could not express preference for any one route, without offending supporters of other routes and thus killing the territorial bill.[2] Not the least of the delicate problems of parliamentary strategy in the historic contest which we are now to witness was that of keeping the pressing railway question out of the discussion.

Still another element of the tangled situation existed, and, while interwoven with the Pacific Railroad project, it was more personal and dramatic, and more decisive of the outcome, than any other phase of the contest. By this element the storm that swept the country and finally drenched the Nation with blood was conjured.

For thirty years Thomas H. Benton had been Senator from Missouri and one of the outstanding leaders of the Democratic Party. Able, imperious, dogmatic, he brooked no rivalry. But in 1843 David R. Atchison, then thirty-six years old, had become the junior Senator, to fill the vacancy caused by the death

[1] Hodder in his definitive essay cited describes each route, the forces supporting or resisting it, and those opposing the whole enterprise, and he demonstrates the commanding influence of the railway plan over the establishment of Territorial Government.

[2] 'Douglas was estopped, both before and after the passage of his bill, from bringing out the connection between the organization of Nebraska and the Northern route for the Pacific Railroad. If he emphasized the importance of the northern, or rather the central, route, he antagonized his friends in the South. If he favored a Chicago terminal, he sacrificed the interests of his constituents in Southern Illinois and laid himself open to the charge of favoring his own private interest. If he favored a St. Louis terminal he sacrificed his own interests and those of his Northern Illinois constituents.' Hodder, in the *Dial*, for Sept. 1, 1909, XLVII, 122.

of Benton's colleague. Six years later Atchison had been re-elected, and the election for his third term was to take place in the autumn of 1854. He was highly popular in the Senate [1] and in seven of his ten years of service he had been chosen by his colleagues President *pro tem.* of that body.[2]

Benton disliked his younger associate and a feud speedily developed. So came about a factional fight in Missouri, which in 1850 resulted in the defeat of Benton in his sixty-ninth year. The old statesman was immediately elected to the House and at once began a vigorous campaign to succeed Atchison in the Senate.[3] Both men were for the organization of Nebraska and for the building of the Pacific Railroad, and Benton had declared that Territorial Government for that country was 'indispensable' to the construction of the road.[4]

Atchison had publicly said that he would not support any bill for that purpose unless his constituents could enter the territory with their slave property, and so contended that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 should be repealed.[5] He assured his constituents that he would have it done. With characteristic violence Benton assailed his rival's position.[6] Thus the repeal of the Missouri Compromise became an issue in Missouri politics, and Atchison knew that the repeal was necessary to his success in his senatorial contest with Benton.[7]

[1] *What led to the War, or, the Secret History of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill:* John A. Parker, 13.

[2] Atchison was elected president *pro tem.* of the Senate within three years from the time he became a member of that body — a circumstance almost without precedent or parallel.

[3] For extended narrative of the political fight between Benton and Atchison and the effect of it on the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, see Ray. A condensation of his elaborate book is given by him, in a paper, 'The Genesis of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill,' *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1914, I, 261–80.

[4] *Douglas:* Johnson, 223; Ray, 72–9. In the debate in the House on the Kansas-Nebraska bill, James Johnston Lindley of Missouri said that his State demanded the immediate organization and settlement of Nebraska so that 'that great enterprise of the age, the Pacific railroad' might be consummated. *Ib.*, 101.

[5] *History of Kansas:* J. N. Holloway, 71.

[6] Only once, when the Nebraska territorial bill was before the Senate in 1853, did Atchison waver, when he declared that, since there was no prospect of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, Nebraska ought to be made a Territory notwithstanding that restrictive measure. Ray, 102–4.

[7] The Missouri Compromise provided that, as a condition to the admittance of Missouri as a slave State, slavery should be prohibited forever in all other territory

During their years of service in the Senate, Douglas and Atchison had become friends;[1] and Douglas was anxious to help his colleague in his fight with his truculent old opponent.[2] Another personal friend of Atchison, who was glad to assist him was a Senator from Kentucky, Archibald Dixon, who had been elected to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Clay.[3] Dixon was a stanch old line Whig, a well-nigh fanatical believer in slavery, and a strong opponent of the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Long before Congress met the press predicted that attempts to repeal would be made and that a struggle would result. Some papers favored and others opposed the repeal.[4]

In briefest possible outline, such was the situation with respect to the organization of Nebraska when the first session of the Thirty-third Congress began. Never was proposal more enmeshed in tangled and conflicting interests than this territorial bill, presented soon after Congress opened. To steer such a measure through the tortuous channels of the treacherous waters before it, required both boldness and caution.

Still another complication speedily emerged. The Wyandot Indians had come from Ohio and had been given land in the Nebraska country, adjacent to Missouri. They had brought with them schools, churches, and methods of orderly industry. Wearied and disgusted with the delay of Congress to give them Territorial Government, this group had in 1852 set up a provisional establishment of their own.[5] Thereupon other Indians,

acquired from France, north of latitude thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes, which included the Nebraska country.

[1] Washington Correspondence, *Missouri Republican*, Jan. 6, in issue Jan. 13, 1854, as quoted in Ray, 221.

[2] Benton was disliked in the Senate, partly because of his attitude towards all prominent Democrats. 'He hates everybody and only regrets that every leading Democrat in America cannot be prostrated at once.' Douglas to Lanphier, Dec. 3, 1852. Lanphier MSS. And see Ray in *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.* 1914, I, 265.

[3] *Douglas:* Johnson, 236; Ray, 273.

[4] *Ib.*, 188–94, citing several examples.

[5] For extended account of the relation of the Wyandots, and their agent and representative, Abelard Guthrie, to the organization of Nebraska, see the *Provisional Government of Nebraska Territory:* William E. Connelley, a publication of the *Neb. State Hist. Socy. Proc. and Coll.*, 2nd Series, III. This carefully prepared volume is from the sources and contains original documents published for the first time. See also same author in *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, XV, 181–91. Also Hodder, 75.

supported by missionaries and by such white persons as were attached to the Government's military station in Nebraska,[1] elected a delegate to Congress, one Rev. Thomas Johnson, a Methodist preacher, a strenuous advocate of slavery, a slaveholder himself, and an adherent of Atchison.

In Iowa, another Johnson, Hadley D., a member of the Legislature and an enthusiast for railroad building generally and for the Pacific project in particular, chanced upon a Missouri newspaper containing a notice of the time and places for voting at this election. He told the citizens of the frontier town of Council Bluffs about it, and they, resolved that Iowa should not be left behind in an enterprise so important, forthwith crossed the Missouri to the Omaha hills, one of the places designated in the 'election notice,' and on October 11, 1853, chose their Johnson as delegate to Congress.[2]

None of these 'elections' had the slightest pretension to legality. To history they are the more important on that account, since they reveal the eagerness and determination of the frontier for the organization of Nebraska. Public meetings were held throughout Iowa and Missouri and resolutions were adopted urging the immediate establishment of Territorial Government and the building of the Pacific Railroad.[3] Those States, and the West generally, were united and aggressive for both projects. So stood matters on the border when Douglas returned from Europe.

The election of the two Johnsons as 'delegates' from a Territory not yet in existence, created a predicament. If Nebraska should be organized, which Johnson, if either, should represent that Territory? The Iowa Johnson hit upon a plan that might,

[1] Connelley, 38–9. Same in *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, xv, 189–90.

[2] 'How the Kansas-Nebraska Line was established;' Hadley D. Johnson. *Transactions Neb. State Hist. Socy.*, II, 85–6. This meeting also actually 'elected' a Governor, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Territory of Nebraska.

Hadley D. Johnson was a native of Indiana, and, in 1850, while still a youth, went to Iowa, because he believed that the Pacific Railroad would soon be built. For this reason he settled at Council Bluffs, convinced that the Eastern terminus of the road would be directly opposite that town.

Johnson was soon elected to the Legislature which was almost wholly occupied with plans for building railways in Iowa. Three lines were to converge at Council Bluffs in order to connect with the Pacific road. *Ib.*, 83–4.

[3] Hadley D. Johnson, 85–6; Hodder, 73–5.

perhaps, give both Johnsons the office: let the immense domain be divided into two Territories. To this happy solution his associates at Council Bluffs agreed and, laden with the weighty thought, the Iowa Johnson set off for Washington, whither the Missouri Johnson had preceded him.[1] So it came about that an expedient of a frontier politician was to have a theatrical effect on national politics and a directing influence in the development of the American Nation.

Augustus Cæsar Dodge, then Senator from Iowa, was a native of Missouri. He had been delegate in Congress from the Territory of Iowa and was elected to the Senate on the admission of that State to the Union. He was a typical Western man, bluff, alert, outspoken, courageous; and he was able. He took infinite pride in the fact that he never had had a servant, had done all his own work, ploughed his own fields, cut his own wood, driven his own horses, mules, and oxen.[2]

The slavery agitation disgusted Dodge. He believed that scheming politicians were making use of it solely for their advancement, and that the doctrine of racial equality was sheer nonsense. He was not, however, greatly interested in the subject, except as the strife over it interfered with his one great purpose. That purpose was the development of the West, and Dodge was irritated by anything that stood in the way of it. Such was his state of mind when, on December 14, 1853, he introduced a bill for the organization of the Territory of Nebraska, as he had promised the people of Iowa that he would do.[3]

It was identical with a bill presented at the last session of the House by Willard P. Hall of Missouri, who belonged to the Benton faction.[4] That measure had passed the House, but had been lost in the Senate where Douglas, as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, had had charge of it. Opposition had come from every quarter and for many reasons, but the prin-

[1] Hadley D. Johnson, 87–8.

[2] Dodge's speech in Senate, Feb. 25, 1854. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXXI, Appendix, 376.

[3] Hadley D. Johnson, 87.

[4] *Douglas:* Johnson, 223–4. Mr. Connelley says that Abelard Guthrie caused Hall to introduce this bill. *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, XV, 189.

cipal resistance was from the South.[1] Douglas was almost discouraged. For eight years, he told the Senate, his heart had been set upon forming 'territorial governments extending from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific Ocean.' Only thus, he said, could the Union be perfected and maintained.[2]

Now Dodge had brought forward the same measure, and Douglas, as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, was again in charge of it. Only by resigning his Chairmanship could he have avoided the management of that bill; only by deliberately consigning it to inevitable defeat could he have failed to make a single one of those parliamentary manœuvres which we are now to review. But Douglas did not want to escape his duty — rather, he welcomed it; for it appeared that, at last, his long-fought-for plan for the organization of Nebraska would be accomplished and the Pacific Railroad built.

Moreover, here was a heaven-sent opportunity to rehabilitate the Democratic Party, and, greatest achievement of all, to stop forever the discussion in Congress of the slavery question. But Douglas must act quickly, or the Southern route for the transcontinental railway would surely be adopted.[3] In fact, only the organization of Nebraska could prevent the building of the Pacific Railroad as planned by Southern statesmen. This circumstance was influential in the South, where opposition instantly developed to Territorial Government over the country through which lay any other route. The sagacity and persuasiveness of Douglas in quieting this antagonism and in actually changing it finally into support of the Nebraska bill, are, perhaps, not equalled in the annals of parliamentary generalship. As we shall now see, he did it by advancing a principle which he had urged for a long time.

Clay, Webster, Cass, Douglas, and nearly all who had championed the Compromise of 1850, had advocated popular sovereignty in the Territories, and had insisted that slavery could not go to Utah and New Mexico because of the soil, climate, and other factors of production.[4] In fact, two years before the debate over the Great Compromise Douglas had asserted the right

[1] Hodder, 78. [2] *Douglas:* Johnson, 224. [3] Hodder, 80.

[4] See speeches in Chap. II, of this volume.

of the people of territories to manage their domestic affairs, including slavery.[1] So Utah and New Mexico had been organized with the express provision that the people might deal with slavery as they liked.

Thus the principle of non-intervention by Congress in the slavery question had been applied. Why should it not govern the organization of the Nebraska country? That course had already been urged by many newspapers.[2] But from the moment Dodge introduced his Nebraska bill, representatives of the press in Washington renewed their forecast of a big fight over the measure on account of the slavery question.[3] For this conflict Douglas was to be assailed as few men have been.[4]

Informed newspaper correspondents said that the Senate Committee on Territories would follow the precedent made by the Compromise of 1850. The Douglas organ in Springfield so announced within a week after Dodge had introduced his Nebraska bill.[5] The *Charleston Courier* predicted that the principles of that adjustment would be made the basis of the Committee's report, which would raise a storm because of its effect on the Missouri Compromise of 1820.[6] The representative of the *New York Journal of Commerce* wrote to his paper that the

[1] Speech in New Orleans in 1848. Garrison, III, 402–3. Douglas had then said that the people of the Territories should regulate their internal affairs in their own way and that Federal interference on behalf of freedom was a 'usurpation.'

Indeed he had tried to introduce this principle of popular sovereignty into the resolution for the annexation of Texas in 1845 'by moving that states admitted from Texas be slave or free as their people should desire;' but Douglas's proposal had been rejected. Hodder, 72.

[2] For example, the *Albany* (N.Y.) *Argus*, Dec. 14, 1853, as quoted in Ray, 193–4, said that the 'precedent' of Utah and New Mexico was intended by the framers of the Compromise of 1850 to 'stand as a guide and landmark for all time,' and was a precedent for the organization of Nebraska. See other examples in *ib.*, 188–94.

The *New York Evening Post*, Dec. 10, 1853, as quoted in *ib.*, 192–3, said that the theory that the 'Compromise of 1850 has repealed the Missouri Compromise' was only the invention of 'a method of getting rid of it.'

[3] *Ib.*, 199–200.

[4] 'In all probability it [organization of Nebraska] would have caused a renewal of the slavery agitation even if Senator Douglas had not been in Congress.' Ray in *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1914, I, 265.

[5] *Illinois State Register*, Dec. 22, 1853.

[6] Washington Correspondence, Dec. 28, 1853, in issue of Jan. 2, 1854, as quoted in Ray, 205.

bill would be the same as the laws for the Territorial Governments of Utah and New Mexico, and added that soil, climate, and 'the necessary pursuits of the people' would 'effectually exclude slavery.' [1]

To Douglas's mind, that was the idea of the Compromise of 1850 — 'the foundation of all,' as Webster had expressed it. So the North could lose nothing by the enactment of such a measure, and the South might not oppose it, since the principle of Congressional non-intervention, for which the South had contended, governed the proposed legislation. Moreover it was in accordance with the Democratic platform of 1852, that 'covenant of reconciliation,' [2] as well as that of the Whigs, and concessions to the South were indispensable to the passage of the bill.[3] Such was the strategy of the situation as Douglas saw it and as it actually was.

On January 4, 1854, he reported the Nebraska bill.[4] That bill and report were what the newspaper correspondents had said they would be. The Compromise of 1850, ran the report, established 'great principles' which were intended to be enduring and which must govern the organization of Nebraska as they had controlled that of Utah and New Mexico. Those principles were that all questions arising from slavery should be left to the decision of the people; that cases involving 'title to slaves' or 'personal freedom' should be settled by the courts; and that the Fugitive Slave Law should be enforced 'in all Territories.'

This was as far as the experienced legislator was willing to go when launching the bill. Douglas was feeling his way, testing the depth and direction of senatorial sentiment. So he merely added casual reference to the opinions of 'eminent statesmen' that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 was unconstitutional, and to the widely held view that any citizen could go with his property into any Territory; but, continued the report, since these were the same 'controverted questions' that had produced 'the fearful struggle of 1850,' the Committee was 'not

[1] Correspondence *New York Journal of Commerce*, Dec. 30, 1853.

[2] *Washington Union*, Jan. 5, 1854. [3] Hodder, 81; *Douglas:* Johnson, 229.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 115.

now prepared' to offer specific recommendations 'as to the legal points involved.' A more astute parliamentary gesture than appears in this vague passage has seldom been made to evade opposition, or, if that could not be effected, to develop the source and strength of it.

In accordance with the direct assertions of the Report, the Committee had added to the Nebraska bill the exact words of the acts for Territorial Governments over Utah and New Mexico which provided that, when prepared, they might enter the Union with or without slavery as their Constitutions should prescribe.

The organ of the Administration heartily endorsed the Report, saying that Douglas's plan — the application of the principles of the Great Compromise — would restore Democratic solidarity, exorcise slavery dissension, make safe the Union. The bill 'presents an opportunity for practical vindication of the policy of the administration.' [1] Swiftly answering an attack by the New York *Tribune*, made 'with mad ferocity,' the *Union* said that, of course, that 'organ of abolitionism' would assail any plan to stop the slavery agitation, which was its 'only capital.' The bill would do just that, by giving to the people of the Territories 'the right of self-government' — that was the issue.[2]

January 7 the *Washington Sentinel* published the measure without a vital section, but included it in a reprint three days later, explaining that it had been omitted by a 'clerical error.' This section had been hastily written by Douglas after the

[1] *Washington Union*, Jan. 5, 6, 1854.

[2] *Ib.*, Jan. 8, 1854. The *Boston Post* strongly supported the bill and Douglas's report which, it said, was 'brief, clear, concise, and admirable.' Douglas had 'done his duty promptly and judiciously, in a model of a report.'

The *Philadelphia Argus* declared that the Report would be 'hailed with delight . . . in all parts of the Union. . . . It gives assurance that no more agitation [in Congress] will be allowed upon this [slavery] question.' Douglas would stand higher than ever 'as a statesman and a patriot.' Clipped in *Washington Union*, Jan. 10, 1854.

The *Baltimore Sun*, Jan. 6, 1854, stated that Douglas was 'entitled to the thanks of the country for the discreet manner in which he has solved the embarrassing questions attending the organization of the Territory of Nebraska.' Quoted in Ray, 221.

The Correspondent of the *New York Journal of Commerce* wrote his paper (Jan. 5, in issue of Jan. 6, 1854) that, while the bill and report would cause excitement, 'I am glad to say, [they] meet with general approbation. . . . If this bill should pass it will settle the [slavery] question as to the future Territories.' *Ib.*, 220.

second reading of the bill,[1] but long before it could come up for discussion.

This addition was: 'In order to avoid all misconstruction, it is hereby declared to be the true intent and meaning of this act, so far as the question of slavery is concerned, to carry into practical operation the following propositions and principles, established by the Compromise measures of 1850, to wit' — the principles announced in the Committee's report, already given.

Although Atchison, the chief supporter of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, was content with the bill as reported,[2] it is obvious that some other Senator or Senators had told Douglas that the mere statement of these principles in a report was not satisfactory, and that an assertion of them must be made in the bill itself. This Douglas had done to secure the support of the objectors, and yet not to give excuse, by forthright repeal of the Missouri Compromise, for vigorous attack upon the measure.[3] The incident was such as marks the ordinary course of disputed legislation.

The South, however, looked askance at the bill even as changed. After all, it was a Western scheme which would give the North still greater power without any benefit whatever to the South. The *National Intelligencer* published many excerpts from Southern papers in opposition to the bill. 'Its introduction fell coldly upon the Southern public,' testified the *New Orleans Bulletin*.[4] Senator George Edmond Badger of North Carolina, the ablest Whig then in public life and an enthusiastic champion of slavery, openly declared that he would not support it;[5] and he and several of his party colleagues finally agreed to do so only when the bill was further altered and after a senatorial caucus determined upon that course.[6] Many Southern

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 232–3 and note. These first and second readings of a bill are formalities which usually are dispensed with.

[2] *Missouri Republican*, Jan. 13, 1854, and *Baltimore Sun*, Jan. 6, 1854, as quoted in Ray, 221–2.

[3] *Douglas:* Johnson, 233–5.

[4] June 14, 1854, clipped in Weekly *National Intelligencer*. June 24, 1854.

[5] Washington Correspondence, *Baltimore American*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1854.

[6] See p. 194, *infra*.

Democrats were kept in line by fear of disruption of their party.

Talk of the direct repeal of the Missouri Compromise was in the air and some thought that Cass of Michigan, the father of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, would make that proposal.[1] It came, however, like a flash of lightning from another and unexpected source. Without consulting anybody,[2] Dixon offered an amendment on January 16, 1854, expressly repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and declaring that owners of slaves could take and hold them within any Territory or State.

Douglas was startled and alarmed. Here was not only the direct issue which that skilful parliamentary tactician had been striving to evade, but an emphatic denial of the principle of nonintervention by Congress in the slavery question; and this, as Douglas had believed, was the vital principle of the Compromise of 1850. Instantly he went to Dixon's place in the Senate and pleaded with him to withdraw the obnoxious amendment, but he pleaded in vain. The stubborn old Whig would not budge.[3]

Sumner countered by offering an amendment prohibiting slavery, and the fight was on.[4] The Nebraska bill was gravely imperilled, the Pacific railway by the Northern route, endangered, the opening of the West, hazarded; and the Democratic

[1] *Albany Argus*, clipped in *Washington Union*, Jan. 19, 1854.

[2] 'To the best of my belief and knowledge, Mr. Dixon consulted no one in this matter.' *True History of the Missouri Compromise and its Repeal:* Mrs. Archibald Dixon, 437. Just before introducing his amendment he showed it to James C. Jones of Tennessee, 'a Whig Senator, and his warm friend.' *Ib.*, 443.

[3] Dixon, 446–7.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 186. The *Louisville Times* (Jan. 17) savagely attacked Dixon: he had 'joined hands' with Sumner, 'one of the most pestilent abolition agitators in the whole Union.' His amendment would only arouse agitation which would 'unquestionably blight the fruits of the Compromise [of 1850]. For the unmanly purpose of embarrassing the National Administration Mr. Dixon is willing again to raise that whirlwind of sectionalism which had well-nigh swept away our institutions,' etc.

Dixon answered in a very long letter, in which he gave the same arguments as those of his speech in the Senate. The bill as Douglas first reported it, was not approved by Southern Senators, but was 'a betrayal of them, and a covert surrender of every slaveholder to be sacrificed at the feet of his more wily and cunning Northern opponents.' It was to prevent that, he said, that he had offered his amendment. Dixon to *Louisville Times*, Jan. 28, 1854, in *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 4, 1854.

Party brought to the brink of another sectional division. Well-nigh every plan and purpose dear to Douglas was in jeopardy.

In a long editorial the Administration organ deplored both amendments. Although hostile to one another, both came from foes of the Democratic Party, and they were certain to 'stir up excitement.' Of course Abolitionists wished 'the fires of discord rekindled,' but Democrats did not — 'let well enough alone.' [1]

Unless the bill was to be abandoned, the altered situation made indispensable a modification of tactics. The course to be followed was simple, plain, unavoidable. It was merely to apply still more plainly in the bill itself the principles of the Compromise of 1850 as already announced in Democratic newspapers and stated in Douglas's report. Agreement from the obdurate Dixon must be secured, for that would make Southern opposition difficult and improbable; and the Administration must specifically endorse the plan, for that would again make the modified bill a party measure.

So Douglas sought the Kentucky Senator and assured him that he would revise the bill to Dixon's satisfaction; it will ruin me, but it is right, he said.[2] The whole subject was then carefully reviewed in a long conference with the President who approved the necessary changes. In order that Pierce might not withdraw 'his countenance after the battle should be joined,' Douglas and Atchison insisted that the President, himself, write the famous amendment, now to be considered, which, in effect, repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820.[3] Such was the need of speedy counsel and decision that Douglas insisted upon the conference on Sunday.[4]

[1] *Washington Union*, Jan. 20, 1854.

[2] Dixon says that Douglas took him for a drive and proposed to 'take charge of the amendment and engraft it on his territorial bill.' Dixon agreed and Douglas said: 'I shall be assailed by demagogues and fanatics without stint or moderation. Every opprobrious epithet will be applied to me. I shall be, probably, hung in effigy. . . . This proceeding may end my political career, . . . but . . . I am prepared to make the sacrifice.' Dixon was 'deeply affected.' Dixon to Foote, Oct. 1, 1858, in Dixon, 447.

Mrs. Dixon relates that, on his return from his drive with Douglas, her husband told her of the talk and that Douglas said: 'By God, sir, you are right, and I will incorporate it in my bill, though I know it will raise a hell of a storm.' *Ib.*, 445.

[3] *Missouri Republican*, April 10, 1854, as quoted in Ray, 214, and other sources there cited.

[4] *Douglas:* Johnson, 237–8.

Meanwhile Senator Dodge, who had become 'an ardent friend and advocate' of the Iowa Johnson's plan, took him to Douglas, and the 'delegate' urged that Nebraska be divided into two Territories, one to be named Kansas and the other Nebraska. The Missouri Johnson had finally agreed to the scheme, including the line of division between the prospective Territories, though with much grumbling and dispute. 'After mature consideration,' Douglas consented to make the change.[1]

Without losing a moment Douglas reported the perfected bill Monday, January 23. It provided for identical Territorial Governments for Kansas and Nebraska as demanded by the two Johnsons [2] and included the President's amendment declaring that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been 'superseded by the principles' of the Compromise of 1850, and was now 'inoperative.' [3] Two weeks later, Douglas moved to strike out the words 'superseded by' and 'inoperative' and to insert, in lieu of them, the words 'inconsistent with' and 'null and void,' [4] a verbal change of no importance, but about which acrid complaint was made in the flurry we are now to witness.

Dixon acquiesced — he only wished to make the bill conform to the principles of the Great Compromise, he said. Douglas was glad to hear it; he had thought that Dixon had intended to 'affirmatively legislate slavery into the Territory,' whereas 'the object of the Committee was neither to legislate slavery in nor out of the Territories;' but only to 'apply the doctrine of Congressional non-intervention.' [5]

The organ of the Administration promptly announced that the President would regard support of the measure as a test of

[1] Hadley D. Johnson, 88–90. 'He agreed that, as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, he would report a substitute for the pending bill, which he afterwards did do,' which 'provided for the organization of Kansas and Nebraska.'

This division was forecast by the *Baltimore Sun*, Ray, 204–5. And see *Douglas:* Johnson, 225–6.

[2] *Ib.*, 238; Hodder, 82.

[3] These words, rather than a direct assertion of repeal, were used in order to avoid opposition from those Southern Senators who maintained that the arrangement of 1820 was unconstitutional and therefore not capable of repeal. Washington Correspondence, *New York Herald*, Jan. 23, in issue of Jan. 24, as quoted in Ray, 213.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 343, Feb. 6, 1854.

[5] *Ib.*, 239–40.

Democratic orthodoxy.[1] Thus concessions to get votes indispensable to the passage of the bill furnished grounds for those attacks upon it, which, as we shall see, resulted in obscuring to the public eye the whole character and purpose of that historic measure — the development of the Great West. For the extension of civil government, the peopling of the plains, the building of railways over them and across the mountains to the harbors of the Coast, were the objects, for the achievement of which the Kansas-Nebraska bill was designed to pave the way.

On January 24, 1854, the day after he had reported the bill, Douglas asked that it be taken up. Chase and Sumner requested delay in order to examine the bill. Although his friends told him not to grant the favor, Douglas did so because, as he said, it was only fair.[2] But several days previously, January 19, 1854, Chase had written a violent attack upon the bill.[3] It was entitled 'Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States.' Chase and Sumner in the Senate and the four Abolitionists in the House, signed the document; Seward and other anti-slavery men refused.[4] It was printed in the abolition organ, the *National Era*, in the New York *Times* and *Tribune*, and sent by mail throughout the country.[5]

It was clever propaganda. Assumptions, arguments, and beliefs were stated in the form of undisputed facts. The Appeal was brief, and could be printed in less than three columns of any ordinary country newspaper. It was written in simple language, every statement was remarkably clear, and the paragraphs were short and distinct. Although many assertions of

[1] *Washington Union*, Jan. 22, 24, 25, 29, 31, 1854. This paper was now owned by the former private secretary of Jackson and Minister to Prussia, A. J. Donelson, who had bought the *Union* from Ritchie in March, 1851. The editor was O. P. Nicholson. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, March 22, 1851, reprinting letters of Donelson and Ritchie. This fact is important, since the editorials of 1854 were not written by the veteran Southern journalist who wrote those of 1850.

[2] Douglas, in Cutts, 95–6.

[3] Chase to J. T. Trowbridge: Warden, 338; Wilson, II, 385. 'Forewarned, as they felt, they had already prepared an appeal to the people of the United States.' *Life and Public Services of Salmon Portland Chase:* J. W. Schuckers, 140.

[4] Schuckers, 160–1. The four were J. R. Giddings and Edward Wade of Ohio, Gerrit Smith of New York, and Alexander De Witt of Massachusetts.

[5] The Appeal did not appear in the *National Intelligencer* until Feb. 4, when the national Whig organ published it in full.

the Appeal were untrue, and the theory of it [Southern plot to extend slavery] wholly false, it aroused the public fury and made the issue which again brought Lincoln into politics.

The Nebraska bill of the last session, it began, was 'based on the principle of excluding slavery from the new Territory;' the present bill 'will open all the unorganized territory of the Union to the ingress of slavery.' So 'we arraign this bill as a gross violation of a sacred pledge; as a criminal betrayal of precious rights; as part and parcel of an atrocious plot to exclude from a vast unoccupied region immigrants from the Old World, and free laborers from our own States, and convert it into a dreary region of despotism, inhabited by masters and slaves.'

In the guise of historical narrative the Appeal stated the usual Free-Soil arguments. The original policy of the Government was 'non-extension of slavery,' and the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had 'consecrated' Kansas and Nebraska 'beyond question, and beyond honest recall . . . to freedom and free institutions forever.'

Yet it was now proposed to repeal that 'compact.' Various pretexts cloaked 'this monstrous wrong.' One of these was that the Nebraska country was in the same situation as the territory acquired from Mexico and was governed by the Compromise of 1850. This was false: the Missouri Compromise of 1820 applied exclusively to territory acquired from France while the Compromise of 1850 applied exclusively to territory acquired from Mexico.

The free States had kept the Missouri bargain, and now the slave States, after receiving the benefits, proposed to repudiate it. 'Not without the deepest dishonor and crime can the free States acquiesce in this demand.'

The Pacific Railroad could not be built by the Central or Northern route, asserted the Appeal, because 'inducements to the immigration of free laborers will be almost destroyed' and the 'intelligent masses will be virtually excluded. . . . The blight of slavery will cover the land.' Newspapers printed in German and other foreign languages were urged to expose this devilish plot against European emigrants, and this appeal had powerful and enduring effect.

The bill would 'sever' the East from the West 'by a wide slave-holding belt of country, extending from the Gulf of Mexico to British North America. It is a bold scheme against American liberty, worthy of an accomplished architect of ruin. . . . Doubtless' the plan was even to 'extinguish freedom and establish slavery' on the Pacific coast and 'thus permanently subjugate the whole country to the yoke of a slave-holding despotism.'

At this point the Appeal contained a blazing paragraph which was to fire a powerful body, already overheated to the point of explosion: 'We implore Christians and Christian ministers to interpose. Their divine religion requires them to behold in every man a brother, and to labor for the advancement and regeneration of the human race.' Everybody must protest in every way against this 'enormous crime.'

The paper then asserted that Douglas was chiefly to blame. To get Southern support for the Presidency, he proposed to make two Territories and repeal the Missouri Compromise. His pretence that that 'compact' had been 'repealed' by the Great Compromise, was a 'manifest falsification of the truth of history. . . . Mr. Douglas himself never advanced such a pretence until this session. . . . It is a sheer afterthought. . . . Will the people permit their dearest interests to be thus made the mere hazards of a presidential game.' [1]

Such was the political circular sent broadcast over the land several days before the bill it assailed was set for discussion in the Senate, and before the men whose motives and purposes it branded as criminal knew of its existence. And it was as effective as it was inflammatory. No denial, explanation, exposure, coming long afterward, could possibly counteract the influence of it on public opinion.[2]

Throughout the North, the Appeal was read with horror; for every word of it was accepted as truthful.[3] Its inflammable

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 281–2.

[2] It was designed to 'forestall popular sentiment' and prejudice public opinion by reaching the people first. *Washington Union*, March 17, 1854.

[3] 'It was copied every-where and read every-where. The people . . . took the alarm.' Chase to John T. Trowbridge: Warden, 341.

Within a fortnight [the Appeal] was reprinted in most of the newspapers throughout

sentences fell like sprays of oil upon the fires which *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had started in every Northern community. Swiftly the holocaust, thus lighted, spread and raged for months with ever increasing fury. Abolition and anti-slavery papers flamed with anger. Abolition and Free-Soil orators shouted vituperation and insult.

The 'Slave Power' was breaking a 'sacred compact' to extend its hell-born tyranny, all said; the fairest land on earth was being given to the Monster; Douglas was serving the Devil to get the Presidency.[1] In this wise began the formation of that sentiment which shaped American politics to a desolating outcome, and even determined the writing of a chapter of American history for almost two generations.

Whatever may be thought of Douglas's purposes at this time, it is only common fairness to admit that there is not a shred of evidence that desire for the Presidency or any personal political advancement had anything to do with any phase of his connection with or management of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. He could have dropped it without discredit or serious continued criticism, at least twice after the attacks upon it began. If the motives attributed to him by the Appeal really inspired Douglas in the desperate fight we are now to witness, he was one of the most stupid politicians of whom history makes mention.

When the Senate heard of the Appeal, surprise and anger were general. The first knowledge Douglas received of the assault upon him and the bill was a copy of it sent him by mail from Ohio.[2] Almost immediately abusive letters began to pour in upon him. Writers of some of these rejoiced that Douglas's wife had died and declared that such a fiend deserved more bereavements.[3] At all times a formidable antagonist, Douglas now became a dangerous foe. Grief for the death of his adored wife still gnawed at his heart. He had become careless of his

the free States. The effect . . . was instant. It . . . created in the North a profound agitation.' Schuckers, 148.

[1] This charge was accepted as true by large numbers, and it survived for many decades.

[2] Douglas in Cutts, 96. Douglas never forgave Chase and Sumner: 'They had thus *lied* — had got first before the country, seeking thus *by fraud* to forestall public opinion.' *Ib.*, quoting Douglas in 1859.

[3] See Douglas's speech, p. 210, *infra*.

appearance and habits.[1] For the moment his ambition was subdued by his sorrow.

Eleven days after the Appeal went to the country and six days after Chase and Sumner had asked that discussion of the bill be postponed to permit them to examine it, the time thus agreed upon to begin debate upon it arrived. Fairly shaking with wrath, Douglas came to the Senate.[2] After morning business on Monday, January 30, 1854, he took the floor to explain the measure. The chamber was filled, galleries crowded, the House without a quorum.[3]

Since we shall presently hear Lincoln make answer to this speech and the one in which Douglas closed the Senate debate, a summary of them must be given; for these two speeches were practically the same as the one soon to be delivered by Douglas in Illinois, except, of course, his dramatic chastisement of Chase and Sumner.

As to slavery, said Douglas, the Committee had been guided by the principle of the Compromise of 1850 — the basic principle of local self-government under which the people themselves should decide 'their domestic institutions' for themselves, 'instead of having them determined by an arbitrary or geographical line.' The Committee's amendment to Dodge's bill 'was only designed to render that clear and specific which seemed, in the minds of some, to admit of doubt and misconstruction.' Since the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been 'superseded' by that of 1850, the Committee thought it best to say so in the bill itself.

As Chairman of the Committee, that was all he had intended to say about the bill, had it been taken up when Chase and Sumner asked for delay, which, as a matter of courtesy, Douglas had promptly granted. But the Appeal had since gone forth and that fact had changed the situation.

Seldom has a legislative body listened to such invective as that with which the enraged Douglas, now and later, lashed the authors and signers of the Appeal; seldom have men submitted to an assault so ferocious.[4]

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 208. [2] Schuckers, 149. [3] *Washington Union,* Jan. 31, 1854.

[4] 'He spoke under great excitement and with energy and power which made an im-

Little did he imagine, Douglas said, that when Chase and Sumner had begged him to delay the bill so that they could consider it, they had already written, signed, and sent to the country a document in which they had 'grossly misrepresented' the bill, 'grossly falsified' the action of the Committee, 'arraigned our motives, calumniated our characters.' Yet they had done so and more: they had applied 'coarse epithets' to Douglas by name.

Chase attempted an explanation of additional and unauthorized signatures to the Appeal printed in the New York *Times* and New York *Tribune* — Douglas silenced him. 'A Senator who has violated all the rules of courtesy and propriety — who showed a consciousness of the character of the act he was doing by concealing from me all knowledge of the fact — who came to me with a smiling face, and the appearance of friendship, even after that document had been uttered — who could get up in the Senate and appeal to my courtesy in order to get time to give the document a wider circulation before its infamy could be exposed; such a Senator has no right to my courtesy upon this floor.'

He would prove even the pretended historical statements of the Appeal to be false. From the very first, the policy of the government had been to separate free and slave institutions by a geographical line. For example, while slavery in the Northwest Territory was prohibited by the Ordinance of 1787, it was permitted in the Territory of Tennessee and soon thereafter in the Territory of Mississippi. This dividing line was made to conform to 'the laws of climate, of production,' and other natural causes which made slavery desirable or undesirable in different regions.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 was based upon the same facts. It extended the geographical line through all the territory then owned by the United States — continued the original policy of the Government; and the 'principles' of that Act 'required that it should be extended indefinitely westward, so far

pression that was manifested in a way unusual in the Senate. . . . We doubt whether two Senators ever received so terrific an excoriation in that chamber as Messrs. Chase and Sumner were subjected to yesterday.' *Washington Union*, Jan. 31, 1854.

as our territory might go, whenever new purchases should be made.'

In the case of the annexation of Texas, of the Mexican acquisitions, and of Oregon, Douglas himself had tried to get the Missouri Compromise line extended to the Pacific Ocean, not because anybody imagined slavery could go North of that line, but to preserve the principle of that adjustment. He had failed, and who had defeated his proposals? Northern Representatives in the House![1] It was this repudiation of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that had 'reopened the slavery agitation with all its fury.' Thus came the 'tremendous struggle of 1850' and the necessity for 'a new compromise.'

If the Missouri adjustment of 1820 had been observed in 1848, as Douglas had insisted it should be, the question never again would have arisen. But it was not observed; and who was to blame? 'The very men who now insist that the Missouri Compromise was a solemn compact. . . . The very men who now arraign me for a departure from the Missouri Compromise are the men who successfully violated it, repudiated it, and caused it to be superseded by the compromise measures of 1850.'

What was the Compromise of 1850? Its 'leading feature . . . was congressional non-intervention as to slavery in the Territories,' and the control by the people themselves of that question, subject only to the National Constitution. In lieu of a geographical line, which had been abandoned, Congress in the Compromise of 1850 'substituted a great principle of self-government, which would allow the people to do as they thought proper.'

Was not that 'new Compromise, resting upon that great fundamental principle of freedom . . . an abandonment of the old one — the geographical line? . . . I say it did supersede it, because it applied its provisions as well to the north as to the south of 36° 30′ . . . a principle of universal application.'

The law for the Territorial Government of New Mexico provided that when prepared for statehood, it might come into the Union with or without slavery as its people might decide, although part of that Territory was north of the Missouri Com-

[1] The Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 18, 1854, made the same statement.

promise line. Moreover that law gave the Territorial Legislatures the same authority over the subject of slavery that they had over any other subject.

Did not those provisions of the Compromise of 1850 'repeal,' 'annul,' 'supersede' the Missouri Compromise, as to that territory? If they did, then Chase and Sumner, asserting in the Appeal that in the Kansas-Nebraska bill Douglas had violated the Missouri Compromise, had 'put forth to the world . . . an atrocious falsehood:' for the Committee had copied the very words of the law establishing Territorial Government in Utah and New Mexico.

What then should be said of such slanderers — men who asserted that the Compromise of 1850 did not repeal the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and yet that the very same words in the Kansas-Nebraska bill did repeal it?

In such fashion Douglas mingled argument and denunciation. The 'Abolition confederates' who had written and sent broadcast the Appeal had, by 'a gross falsification of the laws of the land,' misled the public and sought to 'malign my character.' Worse still, the Appeal declared that the Compromise of 1850 had reference only to territory acquired from Mexico, whereas the law itself showed that some of the territory covered by that Compromise was purchased from France.

Everybody knew that the adjustment of 1850 was designed to 'establish certain great principles, which would avoid the slavery agitation in all time to come. Was it our object simply to provide for a temporary evil? Was it our object just to heal over an old sore, and leave it to break out again?' Was it for such a 'miserable expedient' that Clay and Webster had striven in those not distant days of gloom and peril?

Was it merely to reaffirm 'past and dead legislation' without reference to the future, that, in 1852, both Democratic and Whig parties had declared the arrangement of 1850 to be a definitive settlement of the slavery question? If so they 'palmed off an atrocious fraud upon the American people.' Men who had 'abhorred' the Great Compromise had, nevertheless, gone into the national conventions of their respective parties and agreed to stand by it, 'in order to avoid agitation in the future.'

That was the reason for the Whig and Democratic platforms of 1852, that their purpose, that their effect. If not, those planks had no meaning; and every time a Territorial Government was established, the ancient quarrel would be revived with all its bitterness and danger.

'But, sir, if you treat the Compromise measures of 1850 in the light of great principles . . . applicable everywhere in all time to come, then you avoid the agitation forever.' That was what the Committee had done in perfecting the Kansas-Nebraska bill, declared Douglas. They had applied the doctrine of congressional nonintervention and popular decision as to slavery in the Territories. 'If that principle is wrong, the bill is wrong. If that principle is right, the bill is right.'

The legal effect of the bill was 'neither to legislate slavery into these Territories nor out of them, but to leave the people do as they please,' under the Constitution.[1] Why should any American citizen, North or South, object to that principle? It was the very principle which had worked out freedom whenever slavery had been abolished in the United States.

Look at the original States which had rid themselves of that institution! Did they do that because the Federal Government said they must? 'Not at all; but they have become free States under the silent but sure and irresistible working of that great principle of self-government which teaches every people to do that which the interests of themselves and their posterity morally and pecuniarily may require.'

No act of Congress ever had excluded slavery from an inch of American soil, Douglas continued. Illinois had maintained slavery in spite of the Congressional prohibition of 1787,[2] and banished it of her own volition only when she wished to do so. Iowa and California had decided for themselves that they did

[1] Nothing angered Douglas more than the assertion that the bill would establish slavery in the Territories. The editor of a Democratic paper in New Hampshire, the *State Capital Reporter*, pretended to support the bill and said that it legislated slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. Instantly Douglas denounced him in a harsh public letter, saying that the editor knew he told an untruth and did so to hurt the bill. For this editorial and Douglas's reply, see *Washington Union*, Feb. 25, 1854.

[2] Former Gov. Edward Coles of Illinois, then living in Philadelphia, denied this in an open letter to Douglas. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 18, 1854. Douglas promptly replied, maintaining his assertion successfully. *Ib.*, Feb. 25, 1854.

not want slavery. Long before Congress prohibited slavery in Oregon, the people had done so themselves in a government which they had set up for themselves. The people of Utah and New Mexico had done the same thing.

So would the people of Kansas and Nebraska; 'in that climate, with its productions, it is worse than folly to think of its being a slave-holding country. I do not believe there is a man in Congress who thinks it could be permanently a slave-holding country. I have no idea that it could.' [1]

When you give the people of a Territory a legislature, 'you thereby confess that they are competent to exercise the powers of legislation. If they wish slavery they have a right to it. If they do not want it they will not have it, and you should not force it upon them.'

Every man in Congress who favored the Compromise of 1850 then, favored the Kansas-Nebraska bill now: 'This tornado has been raised by Abolitionists, and Abolitionists alone.' They had raged at the Compromise of 1850 and now they assailed the legislation which was based on the principles of that adjustment, and they had influenced public opinion. But how? By scattering falsehoods about the bill, its authors, and supporters.

The Abolitionists professed their willingness to permit Territorial Legislatures to make laws on inheritance, education, morals, the relations of husband and wife, parent and child, guardian and ward, and all the dearest interests of white men; 'but they are not willing to trust them to legislate in regard to a few miserable negroes. . . . Does it require any higher degree of civilization, and intelligence, and learning, and sagacity, to legislate for negroes than for white men? . . . That is the only question involved in the bill.' [2]

[1] 'It is admitted on all hands that the laws of climate and production and of self-interest will ultimately settle the domestic condition of the Territory. The Nebraska bill proposes to leave the matter to those laws. . . . The proposition appeals so directly to the common sense of every man, that we should be surprised if it failed in the end to meet the approval of the whole people — the abolitionists always excepted.' *Washington Union*, Feb. 2, 1854.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 275–80. The *Boston Post* published Douglas's speech in full, and in an editorial praised it in extravagant terms — it was great, wonderful, conclusive, Douglas did right to castigate his traducers and to de-

Chase called Douglas's speech a 'diatribe.' He knew the 'gigantic stature' of Douglas and how unequal must be any contest between them; yet 'I dare adhere to principle.' But Sumner and Chase had not 'assailed' Douglas; 'We spoke of the bill.' [1]

As manager of the bill, Douglas insisted on continuing the discussion of it. Again Chase asked for delay — he wished to examine 'certain historical facts.' Douglas brusquely refused — Chase should have done that before he 'published a history of this question to the world without investigating those very facts which he wishes now to examine.' A sharp interchange of personalities ensued.[2]

In this temper the celebrated debate over the Kansas-Nebraska bill began. Chase led the attack. His long and able speech was an amplification of the Appeal. 'It is *Slavery* that renews the strife,' by demanding the repeal of a 'sacred compact' in order to get more slave territory. Douglas's 'principle' could not settle the slavery question. 'What kind of popular sovereignty is that which allows one portion of the people to enslave another portion?' asked Chase.[3]

The Appeal and Douglas's reply brought about a Senatorial caucus of the friends of the bill. Party lines were obliterated among Senators from slave States. Every Southern Whig attended. It was agreed, Toombs advised a Southern editor, to 'carry the bill as it stands on the slavery issue,' because it would 'settle the question. . . . It is a measure of peace, equality, and fraternity; and if we let this opportunity of finally settling it escape I see no hope in the future. Dissolution will surely come, and that speedily.' [4]

As the debate went on the uproar throughout the North

nounce their falsehoods. His whole argument was 'masterly,' 'unanswerable,' etc. Reprinted in *Washington Union*, Feb. 9, 1854.

The *Pennsylvanian*, Feb. 1, 1854, also described Douglas's speech as 'masterly' and printed it in full, so that the public might know how the 'abolition harpies' had been lying about the bill and Douglas. *Ib.*, Feb. 3, 1854.

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 280–1.

[2] *Ib.*, 289. [3] *Ib.*, XXIX, Appendix, 133–40.

[4] Toombs to W. W. Burwell, editor *Baltimore Patriot*, Feb. 3, 1854. *Rept. Am. Hist Assn.*, 1911: II, 342–3. Toombs was trying to get Burwell to support the bill in his paper: 'I feel great solicitude about your course on the Nebraska bill.'

aroused by the Appeal increased. Abolition and anti-slavery publications raged. Old line Whig journals grumbled and deplored. The New York *Tribune* led the onslaught — every issue blazed with inflaming editorials.[1] In general the Democratic press rallied to the support of the bill and the Administration; [2] some, influenced by the Appeal, did not.[3]

The pretence that the bill would extend slavery was false and 'senseless,' said the Administration organ; it was nothing but 'the abolition howl and the demagogue's alarm.' [4] Although against slavery, the *New York Sentinel* announced its support of the bill because it was right in principle. 'There is not the slightest probability that either of these territories will ever become Slave States;' the bill would silence slavery talk in Congress and give the country repose.[5]

But the opposition was stridently clamorous. Illinois became resonant with meetings and speeches of protest against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and these continued to grow in number and earnestness. Greeley's editorials fed the flames, for the *Tribune* was widely read in Illinois. Press, speakers, and resolutions adopted the arguments and often the language of the Appeal. Douglas was breaking a sacred compact and pandering to the Slave Power in order to gain the Presidency, exclaimed the *Aurora Guardian*, giving expression to the universal charge of all anti-slavery, most Whig, and some Democratic papers.[6]

We shall hear Lincoln, in due time, make the ablest of all the attacks upon the Kansas-Nebraska bill, though stating argu-

[1] *Tribune*, Jan. 6, 10, 11, 23, 1854.

[2] *Washington Union*, March 17, 1854, giving examples by States.

[3] *Ib.*, Feb. 3, 1854.

[4] *Ib.*, Feb. 26, 1854. 'No Southern man has claimed for the bill that it legislates slavery into the territories.' That claim is 'wickedly made' by 'enemies of the public peace' in order to create a 'SECTIONAL DIVISION' of the country. *Ib.*, March 19, 1854.

[5] Jan. 30, in *Washington Union*, Feb. 3, 1854. See especially a long editorial in the *Pontiac* (Mich.) *Jacksonian* reprinted in the *Washington Union*, Feb. 25, 1854.

[6] *Aurora Guardian*, Feb. 23, 1854. On this question the *Guardian* left the Democratic and supported the Free-Soil Party.

Also *ib.*, Feb. 16; *Free West*, Feb. 16, March 16; *Rock River Democrat*, Feb. 21, March 7, 14; *Peru Daily Chronicle*, Feb. 22; *Ottawa Free Trader*, March 11; *Belleville Advocate*, March 22, April 19; *Canton Weekly Register*, April 27; *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, May 20; and Alton *Daily Courier*, June 5, 1854.

ments and facts already and often adduced by others; but, for the present, he held his peace.

Douglas was sharply watchful of his State. He had heard, he wrote to Lanphier, that Abolitionists, Whigs, 'and some disappointed office-seekers professing to be Democrats,' were plotting to get hostile resolutions passed by the extra session of the Legislature, then meeting in Springfield. They had no constitutional right to do so, since that subject was not stated in the call, and he had written the Governor a letter for publication to that effect.

The 'plot' could not succeed, of course, but even if it did, it would not 'alter or change my course,' Douglas assured his editorial friend and champion. The purpose of the scheme was 'apparent' — it was merely 'to divide the Democratic party, and thus elect a Whig Senator [to succeed Shields in 1855]. Their only chance of success consists in our division.' [1] Lanphier would know who were the leaders of the conspiracy.

But the issue was clear, said Douglas. The party and the Administration were committed to the bill and would 'stand by it at all hazards. . . . The principle of this Bill will form the test of Parties, and the only alternative is either to stand with the Democracy or to rally under Seward, John Van Buren and Co.' The bill would pass and 'the party will then be stronger than ever, for it will be united upon principle.' [2]

Notwithstanding Douglas's warning to Governor Matteson and the organ of the Illinois Democracy, the Legislature did pass resolutions — but not of the kind Douglas had feared. Instead, the General Assembly strongly endorsed the bill as a faithful adherence to the principle of self-government established by the Great Compromise.[3]

In the third week of the debate, Sumner spoke. Like the argument of Chase, Sumner's oration, delivered in 'a sonorous

[1] Everywhere supporters of the bill insisted that opposition to it was chiefly inspired by 'malcontents, dissatisfied editors, disappointed office-seekers, and factious disorganizers,' solely to get political power: Slavery was a mere pretext — they wept for the negro but did nothing for him, etc. Editorial in *Norway* (N.J.) *Advertiser*, March 2, reprinted in *Washington Union*, March 8, 1854.

[2] Douglas to Lanphier '(Private),' Feb. 13, 1854. Lanphier MSS.

[3] *Washington Union*, March 7, 1854.

voice,' [1] was based on the Appeal, which he supported at great length and with much learning. The Nebraska country, the very 'Garden of God,' was guarded from slavery by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and now Douglas was trying to overthrow it and 'open a new market to the traffickers in flesh, that haunt the shambles of the South.' Slavery would go to Kansas and Nebraska just as it had gone to Missouri, unless Congress forbade it — contrast that State with Illinois, made free by the Ordinance of 1787. It must not be. *Right*, not *might*, must rule, exclaimed Sumner.

The Massachusetts Senator revived a phrase, which was to become a universal brand of animosity and derision, far more effective than fact or argument. Even in the North, said Sumner, slavery had produced 'that human anomaly — *a Northern man with Southern principles.* Sir — No such man can speak for the North. [Prolonged applause in the galleries.]' The Union was 'precious,' but liberty was 'more precious far,' Sumner ominously exclaimed.[2]

For the most part Seward, too, merely enlarged upon the Appeal, but he did it with remarkable clearness and ability, making some new arguments. To keep the Missouri 'compact' meant free labor in the heart of the continent to sustain 'ten, twenty, thirty, forty millions of people, and their successive generations forever;' to break it meant incredible desolation.

'If we . . . surrender' to the South, there could be no more free States, argued Seward. Of course slaves would go to Kansas and Nebraska; and a few of them were enough to make those Territories slave States. Witness Delaware which had but two thousand slaves and ninety-one thousand freemen and yet was a slave State. The proportions were substantially the same in Missouri and Maryland which, nevertheless, were slave States. New slave States were the stakes in the game the South

[1] Dodge's speech, Feb. 25, 1854. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 380.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 262–70; *Works*, III, 285–332. Italics Sumner's.

The phrase was in use before Sumner employed it. 'He [Johnson] touched on nullification, and was called to order by the Speaker, who, since Calhoun's chop round to the Northern man with Southern principles, has become tenderly observant of the feelings of the Nullifiers.' *Memoirs:* Adams, IX, 510 (March, 1838).

was playing to win; and, alas! many Northern men were playing for the North to lose.

Was the fate of free institutions to be left to the 'interested cupidity or the caprice of . . . the pioneer' rather than to 'the collective wisdom of the American people and the most solemn and time-honored statute of the American Congress,' inquired Seward. Why establish Territorial Government in Nebraska? Who asked for it? 'Practically, no one.' The Kansas-Nebraska bill was nothing but a 'pretext' for repealing the Missouri Compromise. Did the South imagine that that would put an end to the slavery discussion? Vain hope! That conflict would continue, because it 'is an eternal struggle between conservatism and progress, between truth and error, between right and wrong.' And Progress would win, Right would triumph.

Behold the North 'teeming with an increase of freemen, educated, vigorous, enlightened, enterprising freemen; such freemen as neither England, nor Rome, nor even Athens ever reared.' Already half a million freemen from Europe every year augmented that vast and glorious host, 'and ten years hence, half a million, twenty years hence, a million of freemen from Asia will augment it still more,' Seward prophesied. 'American slavery . . . cannot pour forth its blackened tide in volumes like that.' [1]

If Sumner irritated and Chase angered the supporters of the bill, Seward alarmed them. He was 'the shrewdest speculator in the dark school of agitation,' exclaimed the Democratic national organ,[2] and it insisted that the formation of a new party was his objective.[3]

As to the immense and growing emigration, was not the unoccupied Nebraska country the best place for it, asked the supporters of the bill in answer to Seward? Besides, 'our own march is westward' — natural law, the law of trade, indeed, divine

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., xxix, Appendix, 150–5.

[2] *Washington Union*, Feb. 24, 1854.

[3] 'Our Whig and abolition neighbors . . . are far less apprehensive of the loss of free territory than of the loss of a theme for perpetual agitation — a rallying cry for a party, and a chance of coalition . . . between Whigs, free-soilers, and abolitionists, who, united, may form a forlorn hope to charge again the serried ranks of democracy.' *Pittsburg* (Pa.) *Post*, as quoted in *ib.*, Feb. 19, 1854.

law impelled us thither. Not long ago it was said that 'California was not worth a dollar,' yet that State was now saving America from bankruptcy. See what marvels had been wrought in Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota! The same would be true of the now unorganized West.[1]

Time and again Southern Senators asserted that it was most unlikely that slavery could exist in Kansas and Nebraska.[2] They supported the bill for the sake of the principle of equality and as 'a measure of peace,' because it would banish the slavery dispute from Congress.[3] The South was eager for a final settlement, the *Washington Union* declared. 'They are worn out with agitation and are looking now, as they have been for years, to the adoption of some permanent rule that will insure quiet and peace.'

Still, the South was not united for the bill, even as amended. Large numbers were frankly hostile. 'Many Southern men are opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise,' a well-informed correspondent of the *New York Commercial Advertiser*

[1] *Washington Union,* Feb. 19, 1854.

[2] 'I have no more idea of seeing a slave population in either of them than I have of seeing it in Massachusetts; not a whit.' Badger of North Carolina, Feb. 14, 1854. *Cong. Globe,* 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 149.

'I believe that the passage of this bill is of no practical importance so far as new slave States are concerned. . . . I support it . . . as a measure of peace.' Hunter of Virginia, Feb. 24, 1854. *Ib.,* 225.

'Slavery may or may not go there. The inclination of my mind is that it never will.' Brown of Mississippi, Feb. 24, 1854. *Ib.,* 228.

'Mr. Webster was right in saying that the laws of God will govern the question of the employment of slave labor.' Butler of South Carolina, Feb. 25, 1854. *Ib.,* 235.

'I have inquired' among Southern Senators whether they thought slavery would be 'established' in Kansas and Nebraska. 'The greater number . . . concur in the opinion that it never will.' Bell of Tennessee, March 3, 1854. *Ib.,* 414.

Clemens of Alabama, now no longer in the Senate, in a private letter quoted President Pierce as having said that the bill was 'a proposition in "favor of freedom;"' that 'although we might absorb the whole of Mexico, *not another slave State would ever come into the Union;*' that he was surprised that the North should oppose it and '*that the South should be willing to take it.*'

This letter was published and Clemens wrote another to the President saying that he may have misunderstood Pierce's statement about the South, etc.; but, Clemens added: 'I thought the South must be the loser. I think so now.' *Washington Union* clipped in Weekly *National Intelligencer,* April 1, 1854.

[3] 'I desire to remove this great cause of disturbance [slavery agitation] and anxiety from our midst.' Hunter, *Cong. Globe,* 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 225.

In a letter to Dixon, March 7, 1854, Crittenden opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Crittenden MSS.

advised his paper: 'They know very well that slavery can never be carried into Nebraska, and they fear that the repeal of the Compromise, while it will do them no good, will establish a precedent for the repeal of other laws — the fugitive slave law, perhaps.' [1]

Parts of the South were indifferent. The *Washington Union* declared that 'the South looks on unmoved whilst the question is pending before Congress.' [2] The *New Orleans Weekly True Delta* admitted that people in that region showed 'not the least interest' in the bill. That paper supported it, 'not from any idea that slavery can ever exist in the Nebraska or Kansas territories, or any other territories, the products of which are wheat, oats, and other cereals,' but to deprive Congress of the pretext 'for interfering in the matter.' [3] Rhett's paper, the *Charleston Mercury*, complained that in the South 'all is calm and easy indifference,' and that many Southern papers, even in South Carolina, were against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.[4] After the passage of the bill, the *New Orleans Bulletin* stated editorially, that 'we believe the slaveholders of the South would have preferred its defeat. . . . We have yet to meet one who does not look upon the introduction of the Nebraska bill as ill-timed, ill-advised, and injudicious, if not positively wrong.' [5]

Some men of prominence in the South were frantically opposed to the measure. 'As a Southern man and a national man, I should like to see this misshapen and ill-begotten monster killed,' wrote John M. Botts of Virginia. 'Let the demon of discord be strangled in its birth! . . . Let it die and rot upon the

[1] Quoted in the *Alexandria Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1854.

[2] Feb. 18, 1854.

[3] April 1, 1854.

When the bill passed the *Delta* exclaimed: 'The country is at last, thank fortune, relieved from the Nebraska bore.' It was 'deemed of so little real advantage by the South as scarcely to command more than a mere passing commendation of the motives of its supporters in the free States.' But 'the adoption of the bill will prove a perfect godsend' to Free-Soil papers. *Ib.*, May 27, 1854.

In like vein, at the same time, Stephens wrote: 'Let them [Abolitionists] howl on — 'Tis their vocation.' Stephens to J. W. Duncan, May 26, 1854. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 345.

[4] Clipped in Weekly *National Intelligencer*, July 1, 1854.

[5] June 14, clipped in *ib.*, June 24, 1854.

dunghill! Let every lover of his country . . . turn from it with loathsome and shuddering disgust, as they would avoid a pestilence or the plague.' [1] The authors of the bill and amendments 'will soon find that they have raised a spirit which will wing its way through storm and tempest to the funeral pyre of the republic,' wrote Clemens.[2]

The *Detroit Free Press* asserted that 'Mr. Douglas's bill is the greatest advance movement in the direction of human freedom that has been made since the adoption of the Constitution,' for '*never before has the right of all American communities to self-government been fully recognized.* . . . Is there the most distant probability that they [the Territorial legislatures] will exercise that control in favor of slavery?' California, Utah, New Mexico had not, nor would Kansas or Nebraska. Whig and abolition demagogues were solely responsible for the popular idea that there was 'danger of slavery extension.' [3]

The *National Intelligencer* belatedly opposed the measure because it would give 'new life and zeal . . . to the fanatical spirit of abolitionism in the North.' This 'inspires in the opposite section of the Union only a feeling of scorn or hatred.' [4] A correspondent from New York in that paper warned its Northern readers not to indict the South for 'the proposed repeal of the *Missouri Compromise.* . . . Do not put the saddle on the wrong horse. It is not on the South that the blame of the measure should rest, except for the fault of being too easily seduced into it; and it is not against the South that your indignation should be especially directed, if at all. . . . Let it be remembered, in New York and elsewhere, that it was *not a Southern movement.* It came from the North — with a patriotic purpose, doubtless

[1] Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Feb. 18, 1854.

[2] *Ib.*, Feb. 11, 1854. For other Southern protests against the bill see *ib.*, Feb. 18, March 18, 1854.

'The Compromises of 1820 and of 1850 are clearly in conflict. . . . Both cannot stand.' We admire 'the independence and courage of Senator Douglas. . . . Patriotism and boldness . . . were requisite to inspire him' to attempt a permanent settlement of the slavery question in Congress. But his success depends largely on the support which the South may give him. *Mobile* (Ala.) *Register*, in *Washington Union*, Feb. 16, 1854.

[3] Quoted with editorial approval by the Weekly *National Intelligencer*, March 25, 1854.

[4] *Ib.*, Feb. 25, 1854.

— *but it came from the North* — is claimed as an Administration measure — and the North should not run away with all the merit of the act, whatever it be, and bear none of the blame.' [1]

Some Southern Senators supported the bill with strong reluctance. Brown of Mississippi thought that it ought to declare in direct terms that the Missouri Compromise 'is hereby repealed.' [2] Butler of South Carolina did not like the bill and voted for it, he said, only because its 'intendments' were good and it wiped out sectional lines. Had the Missouri Compromise brought harmony? 'No, sir; instead of Peace standing upon the Missouri line, with healing in her wings, and olive branches in her hands, it has been Electro [Alecto], with snakes hissing from her head, and the torch of discord in her hand.' [3]

Constantly the debate drew away from constitutional, legal, and economic issues and centered on the racial question, like steel splinters drawn to one point by an irresistible magnet. Every Southern Senator reverted to the subject. Sumner and Chase had fixed their eyes on abolition, and they spoke on slavery far more than on the bill. Racial equality was impossible — would Abolitionists themselves consent to a 'domestic relation' with a negro? asked Butler.[4] The South contained more than three million slaves; if they were freed and sent North, would Northern people receive them? 'No, sir; they would resist them with the bayonet.' [5]

Why not let those who understood the institution deal with it? The 'spirit of the age' pervades the South as well as the North.[6] Why should white men fight among themselves on a racial question? 'The liberties of America were won by white men for white men, by our race for our race.' [7] Let discord and hatred be banished from the hearts of fellow citizens, 'descendants of a common revolutionary ancestry.' [8]

Many Senators, like Mason of Virginia, were for the bill solely because they thought it would deprive such men as

[1] Quoted with editorial approval by the Weekly *National Intelligencer*, March 4, 1854.
[2] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 232. [3] Butler, *ib.*, 233–4.
[4] Butler, *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 234.
[5] *Ib.*, 237. [6] Hunter, *ib.*, 226.
[7] Toombs, *ib.*, 351. [8] Badger, *ib.*, 149.

Seward, Chase, and Sumner of all pretext for slavery agitation: 'their vocation will be gone, . . . and they will expire, as they deserve to expire, howling — howling like fiends attempting to destroy the country.' [1] Douglas wrote to Cobb that the bill would 'triumph and impart peace to the country and stability to the Union.' [2]

Northern Senators, especially those from Western States, used harsher language than Southern Senators.[3] 'Sir, if the time shall ever come' when the North prevents Southern citizens from recovering their runaway slaves, 'the time for dissolution will have arrived, and ought to arrive,' exclaimed Weller of California.

'Yes, sir,' interrupted Dodge of Iowa; 'ought to arrive.'

Who inspired the false and iniquitous propaganda against the South, asked Weller? 'Men who are constitutionally fond of attending to everybody's business except their own. . . . During the last ten years I have directed my particular attention to that point, and whenever I came across an Abolitionist, I have endeavored to find out his social character; and in nine cases out of ten I have discovered that he was an intermeddler in the affairs of others.'

Weller must spend and end his days 'upon the shores of the Pacific,' he said, and neither North nor South had any claims on him. So he was not a '"Northern man with Southern principles." I scorn the imputation. I am an American with constitutional principles.' The Compromises of 1820 and 1850 were in direct conflict, he said, and he chose the latter because they were right.[4] A journalist who was there recorded that 'the galleries and the grave Senators joined in a rapturous burst of applause.' [5]

Talk of human equality was 'a self-evident lie,' cried Senator John Pettit of Indiana, and it was no less false to say that the bill would 'create' slavery in those Territories, for it will not prosper there. Minnesota, Washington, Oregon, Utah, and

[1] Mason, *ib.*, 299.

[2] April 2, 1854. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 343.

[3] Wilson, II, 390–1.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 197–201. From the first this had been the Democratic contention. *Washington Union*, Feb. 3, 1854.

[5] *Ib.*, March 5, 1854.

New Mexico would soon enter the Union and every one of them would be a free State. Inevitably Kansas and Nebraska would be the same. So let the North be just to the South which could not possibly recover her lost power.[1]

After an uncommonly close and unemotional argument in support of the bill — 'A SPEECH OF GRANITE,' as the *Washington Union* called it — Senator Moses Norris of New Hampshire suddenly turned on Sumner tigerishly. He had displayed 'self-conceited arrogance.' His pet phrase, 'Northern men with Southern principles,' was a 'gross, unmitigated insult to this body.' Sumner had urged resistance of law 'even unto blood' and yet, by a 'shameless violation' of courtesy and right, lectured the Senate on the 'sanctity of plighted faith.'

Sumner denied that he had counselled forcible resistance. Norris inserted Sumner's speech. How dare he denounce a majority of Northern Senators for doing what they thought was right![2]

Political advantage was the object of the leaders of the abolition faction, charged Dodge of Iowa. That fact 'alone accounts for the falsehood and virulence of their orators and their presses — carried to the treasonable extreme of demanding a . . . dissolution of the Union.' Seward was 'the Napoleon of this grand movement.' White and black could not be made equal and no negro with any 'common sense, ever asked for or expected that position.' How trivial the slavery question was compared with the development of the West. The settlers were hardy, industrious, intelligent men, capable of self-government — not the ignorant, shiftless riffraff at whom Seward sneered. Slave labor could not compete with such men in a Northern climate, testified Dodge.

The 'practical operation of this bill . . . will free several hundred Missouri and Arkansas negroes,' he asserted, since a few slave-holders might go to these Territories under arrangements to free their slaves after a while. But 'you rarely find a man, the owner of slaves, ready to dash in among a new community like that which will people Kansas and Nebraska.' Most immigrants

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 212–21.

[2] *Ib.*, 305–10. March 3, 1854.

even from Missouri and Arkansas, would be 'needy' persons who 'own no slaves.' In short, it was a certainty, Dodge declared, that Kansas and Nebraska would be 'filled with a population overwhelmingly free.'[1] Western men wanted no outside interference in their affairs.

As a member of the Committee on Territories, Dodge told what had been done in that body and lauded the conduct of Douglas. 'After the question was raised in the committee, and he was called on to act up to the principles established by the Compromise measures of 1850,' Douglas had 'met the crisis . . . as became the young and progressive Democrat who reported and carried the bills for the admission of Texas, Iowa, Florida, and Wisconsin into the Union; . . . as became the Senator who reported the bills admitting California as a State, and New Mexico and Utah as Territories.'

'You lie!' That, said Dodge, was his answer to the charge that he supported the bill to help or hurt 'any aspirant to the Presidency. . . . I am no man's man for that exalted station.'

Why had not Sumner, when reading the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which he said was a sacred and irrepealable compact, read the provision in it about fugitive slaves? That section of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 said that runaway slaves should be given up to their owners. Yet in one breath Sumner demanded the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, and in another, asserted the sanctity and permanence of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 which contained a fugitive slave provision.[2]

Finally the end of the debate approached. When the Senate convened on March 3, 1854, Senator John Bell of Tennessee made a long speech against the bill. Of course Douglas's idea was 'statesmanlike' — the extension of the great Northwest, the construction of a Pacific railroad with an eastern terminus on the Iowa or Missouri line — and doubtless the people would be thrilled by 'the grandeur of his plans;' but the bill was untimely.

[1] This was the sentiment of Iowa and other western border States at that time. *Miners Express* (Iowa) and *Milwaukee News*, in *Washington Union*, Feb. 15, 1854. The Wisconsin paper said that the Kansas-Nebraska bill would not 'add one inch of slave territory to the United States.'

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 375–83.

This was touching closely upon the tremendous project behind the measure.[1] Douglas hastened to disavow any 'grand scheme' — he had none, he assured the Senate, except to open the Nebraska country to settlement under the principles of popular self-government. Bell said that he did not mean to be 'offensive' — he knew what an ardent and sincere expansionist Douglas was:

'I think for a long time he has had a passion, amounting to a sort of mania, for the organization of new Territories, and the founding of new States.' Behold those which Douglas had already created! 'It seems . . . that it will not be long before he will have succeeded in organizing three or four more.' If Americans were Romans, Douglas would be 'entitled, not to one, but to ten civic crowns!' Bell hoped that Douglas would not be offended, by the comparison.

'Certainly not,' said Douglas, amid laughter.

Bell utterly disapproved of the Missouri Compromise, he declared; but its repeal would only stir up agitation. The support of the bill by the South had been won by that device; but the South would get no practical benefit from it — it would 'prove utterly barren — bearing neither fruit nor flower' to that section. Indeed most Southern Senators to whom Bell had talked, admitted that slavery never would go to Kansas or Nebraska. Why, then, invite storms of protest, when nothing tangible could be gained.[2]

Through hectic hours the debate dragged on, enlivened now and then by angry words, by wit and laughter, and, sometimes though rarely, by flashes of eloquence. Twilight fell and the candles were lighted. At eleven o'clock, Douglas, wearied and disgusted, moved to adjourn. Senators objected. Douglas offered to waive his right to close if the Senate would come to a vote at once. But no! Sumner wanted to speak. Houston wanted to speak. At last, near midnight, Douglas took the floor.

[1] Notwithstanding Bell's opposition to the bill, many in Tennessee were for it, because it would facilitate the building of the Pacific Railroad, and would prevent future slavery agitation in Congress — there would be no more Northern or Southern Senators and Representatives battling for abolition on the one hand, or 'Southern Rights' on the other. Letter from Nashville in *Washington Union*, March 4, 1854.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 407–15.

Late as was the hour, galleries, aisles, and corridors were thronged. Douglas spoke until nearly daylight. His speech was an intellectual and physical feat. Newspaper correspondents always made note of Douglas's prodigious endurance, his powerful mind, his compelling personality,[1] and on that stormy March night those qualities were called into fullest action. It was 'the greatest speech of his life,' the editor of the *Washington Union* thought, and even Douglas's admirers 'were surprised at his . . . genius.' [2]

Much of his speech was a restatement of arguments made when opening the debate; but he evaded no objection made to the bill. The vastness of the Kansas-Nebraska domain was a common feature of such legislation, he said; look at the Northwest Territory, not long ago a stupendous wilderness, now five splendid states. Territorial Government had been too long delayed. Over those boundless plains, peopled by savages, more than a hundred thousand Americans made their way every year, without the slightest protection. It was the same with mails and official communications. Time and again he had offered bills for the safe-guarding of emigrant routes and opening the country, and they had been thrust aside as of no importance. And now, when there was a chance to organize Territorial Governments, he was told that there were no people there to govern.

The Committee on Territories were 'not volunteers in this business' — they had merely done their duty in reporting and perfecting the bill. Their task had been hard and delicate. They knew that the 'abolition doctrine' of congressional interference with slavery in the Territories, had been urged since 1820 and had kept up 'an incessant slavery agitation in Congress, and throughout the country, whenever any new Territory was to be acquired or organized,' but they also knew that congressional intervention which had caused all the trouble had been supplanted in 1850 by the principle of popular self-government, and the Committee had acted accordingly. Yet this unavoidable

[1] Poore, I, 498.

[2] *Washington Union,* March 5, 1854. The *Union* printed a Sunday edition, so eager was the public for particulars of the debate.

Henry Wilson in his book published twenty years later (1875) admitted that Douglas's 'speech was able, adroit, defiant, and denunciatory.' Wilson, II, 393.

performance of a plain duty had brought upon Douglas 'denunciation and abuse.'

Assailants of the bill had followed 'in Indian file, the narrow and crooked path,' marked out by the abolition confederates in their 'manifesto.' They had tried to make the country believe that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was 'the main object and aim of the bill.' They knew that the repeal was only 'a mere incident;' yet 'they make war on the means by which we propose to accomplish an object instead of openly resisting the object itself.'

Douglas quoted from his speech in the Senate in 1850, in which he had thrice asserted that the people of the Territories should settle for themselves all their domestic questions including that of slavery; and from his Chicago speech before 'an excited and frenzied multitude' in which he had said the same thing even more emphatically. He had been forced to make the Chicago speech, he said, 'in order to arrest and suppress the treasonable purposes of these Abolition confederates, and avert the horrors of civil war.'

And now these same 'Abolition confederates' had 'perpetrated a monstrous forgery in that speech,' making Douglas say that he 'would "cling with the tenacity of life to the Compromise of 1820."' [1] That falsehood — that 'deliberate act of forgery' — was the 'staple article out of which most of the Abolition orators of the small anti-Nebraska meetings manufacture the greater part of their speeches.'

It was after the Chicago speech had been printed in the newspapers and circulated in pamphlet form, that the Legislature of Illinois rescinded its instructions to Douglas and Shields to vote for the prohibition of slavery in the Territories and, instead,

[1] This version was printed in the *New York Evening Post*, Feb., 1854. The *Washington Union*, Feb. 12, printed this and the correct quotation from Douglas's speech as follows:

New York Evening Post version	Correct version
'I am prepared to stand or fall by the American Union, clinging with the tenacity of life to all its glorious memories of the past, and the precious hopes of the future, and among those glorious memories of the past, I pronounce the Compromise of 1820 to be one.'	'For my part, I am prepared to maintain and preserve inviolate the Constitution as it is, with all its compromises, to stand or fall by the American Union, clinging with the tenacity of life to all its glorious memories of the past and precious hopes of the future.'

adopted resolutions approving the Compromise of 1850 and specifically declaring that the people of Territories should establish such governments as they pleased, without any limitation whatever.

Yet Chase, Sumner, and the other 'Abolition confederates,' now assert that such a thing was never suggested before Douglas reported the Kansas-Nebraska bill and that it was a 'sheer afterthought.'

The amendments to the bill had been made solely to remove 'all doubt and cavil as to the true meaning and object of the measure.' Did his opponents deny that the original bill had the legal effect of repealing the Missouri Compromise? Let them rise in their places and say so, if they thought otherwise. Turning to Chase and Sumner, Douglas demanded an answer. Both were silent and Douglas exclaimed: 'I despair of extorting a response from them.'

They dare not answer, said Douglas, for they would be confounded by their Appeal which he held in his hand, a slanderous document published to the world before a single amendment to the bill had been made. Yet, in their speeches since, they had asserted that the Committee did not intend at first to repeal the Missouri Compromise. If their speeches were true, what apology could they make to the Senate and the country for having 'falsified . . . over their own signatures,' the action of a Senate Committee?

Frequently Seward interrupted with suavity and politeness and always Douglas yielded with equal graciousness. Once Seward could not restrain his admiration for Douglas: 'I have never had so much respect for him as I have to-night.'

Humorously Douglas answered: 'I see what course I have to pursue in order to command the Senator's respect. I know now how to get it. [Laughter.]'

It was to evade the true and real issue, that the 'Abolition confederates' had raised the false cry of 'violated compact,' Douglas asserted. That was the purpose of the Appeal, and it had misled the people. 'In consequence of arousing passions and prejudices, I am now to be found in effigy, hanging by the neck, in all the towns where you have the influence to produce

such a result. . . . In your State, sir [turning to Chase], I find that I am burnt in effigy in your Abolition towns. What will your people think of you when they find that you have deceived them?'

Chase said he was sorry for what had happened in Ohio — he never had intended to injure Douglas.

In dangerous mood, Douglas turned upon him and repeated the offensive phrases of the Appeal. Did not Chase write and publish all that to the world, and everything else calculated to bring insult and disaster upon Douglas — 'not even excepting the insulting letters which I have received from his constituents, rejoicing at my domestic bereavements, and praying that other and similar calamities may befall me?'

And now Chase avowed that 'he meant nothing unkind.' He could not 'impugn a gentleman's motives! No! not he!' Douglas said he had been burned in effigy even in Boston; but no wonder, for Sumner lived there. Douglas's attack became a philippic. The galleries burst into applause.

Then for a time, Douglas calmly resumed his argument as though nothing unusual had happened. Soon, however, he turned again on Sumner and Chase. Sumner's catchword, 'a Northern man with Southern principles,' was 'a disreputable insinuation,' thundered Douglas. The galleries roared with applause. How dare those abolition confederates impeach his motives? Were Chase and Sumner 'incapable of conceiving that an honest man can do a right thing from worthy motives?' Did their own record as seekers of political preferment entitle them to 'judge the character and principles of other Senators?'

'I must be permitted to tell the Senator from Ohio, that I did not obtain my seat in this body either by a corrupt bargain or a dishonorable coalition! I must be permitted to remind the Senator from Massachusetts that I did not enter into any combinations or arrangements by which my character, my principles, and my honor, were set up at public auction or private sale in order to procure a seat in the Senate of the United States!'

'But there are some men whom I know that did,' cried the pugnacious Weller, looking at Chase.

'Do you say that I came here by a bargain?' demanded Chase.

The Senate was in confusion. It was now nearly four o'clock in the morning, and Douglas was closing his speech with a storm of invective. Those who had branded him as a criminal plotter should not escape unwhipped of exposure and public scorn.

Chase explained that in the Appeal he had not intended to 'impute . . . any improper motive' to Douglas. All great measures were influenced by political campaigns. Ambition to be President, was not unworthy; nor was it improper to champion a bill to advance such an ambition, if the bill was good. Chase thought that the Kansas-Nebraska bill was not 'a right one,' Douglas thought it was. It was merely a difference of opinion. 'I do not make, and I do not desire to make, any personal imputations upon him in reference to a great public question.'

Weller tried to answer, but Douglas refused to allow him 'to come into the ring at this time.' The quarrel was his 'peculiar business,' growled Douglas. Then with mingled scorn and contempt, he made a sorry exhibition of Chase. The Appeal had charged that Douglas's motive for reporting the bill was to secure the Presidency; yet, to shield himself, Chase now declared that he had not meant to impute improper motives to Douglas, since a desire to be President was not 'unworthy.'

Oh, no! Chase had not said an unkind thing of Douglas personally: he 'only said . . . that my bill was a "criminal betrayal of precious rights;" he only said it was an "atrocious plot against freedom and humanity;" he only said that it was "meditated bad faith;" he only spoke significantly of "servile demagogues;" he only called upon the preachers of the Gospel . . . to denounce and resist such a monstrous iniquity.' But now, when called to account, Chase assured Douglas and the Senate, that he intended 'no personal disrespect' by the use of such language.[1]

The Senate chamber was now charged with intense excitement. Weller could no longer restrain his feelings, and Douglas yielded to the aroused Californian for a few minutes. He had

[1] Douglas 'was abundantly justified in this castigation; for never before has a public man been so hunted and hounded as Judge Douglas. Not only his character as a Senator, but his reputation as a man, has been vilely traduced; and so far has this fiendish war been conducted, that his enemies have not scrupled [to make] the foulest allusions to his recent domestic affliction!' *Washington Union*, March 5, 1854.

been a citizen of Ohio, Weller said, when Chase was elected, and he proposed to state the facts about that event. The Legislature was to elect certain Judges of the Supreme Court; members of the Board of Public Works were to be appointed. A few Abolitionists in the Legislature held the balance of power between the Whig and Democratic parties. As the result of a deal, the Ohio 'black laws' were repealed, 'certain Democrats' made Judges, and Chase elected to the Senate. 'Those facts transpired about the time I left the State for California.'

Chase explained that all Democrats, and none but Democrats in the Legislature of Ohio had voted for him, that certain Democrats who agreed with him on slavery but belonged to the old organization had been made Judges, but that the Legislature repealed the 'black laws' before the election of Senator and Judges.

'Was not that part of the agreement which resulted in your election?' asked Weller.

'So far as I know,' it had nothing to do with it, answered Chase.

It had happened the very year that he had left for California, said Weller, 'and I was very glad to have an opportunity of changing my residence on that remarkable occasion. [Laughter.]'

Sumner denied that he was 'a party, in any way, directly or indirectly, to those efforts which placed me here.' He shrank instinctively from personal altercations, he said; but it was false that he had been elected to the Senate by 'any waiver of principles; . . . by any effort or activity of my own.' Moreover, the Senate had no jurisdiction, 'at this time, to try my election to the Senate.'

Sumner had better have kept quiet. If he resented reference to the circumstances of his election, Douglas retorted, if he shrank from 'personal assaults,' if his principles were so lofty, his sensibility so delicate, 'he should . . . refrain from assaulting the character and impugning the motives of better men than himself.' His great voice booming through the Senate Chamber, his short but powerful body vibrant with rage, his heavy mass of black hair disordered and erect, 'blue fire' flaming from his eyes,

Douglas, in the murky candlelight of the morning hours, presented a weird and terrible figure to the tired but alert Senators and to the throng of spectators who had stayed throughout that stormy night.

Sumner had invited castigation — he received it. 'Everybody knows,' thundered Douglas, 'that he came here by a coalition or combination between political parties holding opposite and hostile opinions. . . . It will not do for the Senator to say that he was not a party to it, for he thereby betrays a consciousness of the immorality of the transaction, without acquitting himself of the responsibilities which justly attach to him. As well might the receiver of stolen goods deny any responsibility for the larceny, while luxuriating in the proceeds of the crime, as the Senator to avoid the consequences resulting from the mode of his election, while he clings to the office.'

Harder and harder did Douglas wield the lash on Sumner. 'I must be permitted to remind him of what he certainly can never forget, that when he arrived here to take his seat for the first time, so firmly were Senators impressed with the conviction that he had been elected by dishonorable and corrupt means, there were very few who, for a long time, could deem it consistent with personal honor to hold private intercourse with him. So general was that impression, that for a long time he was avoided and shunned as a person unworthy of the association of gentlemen.'

Douglas told how Sumner had 'gradually' overcome this personal dislike by 'bland manners and amiable deportment; and I regret that the Senator should now, by a violation of all the rules of courtesy and propriety, compel me to refresh his mind upon these unwelcome reminiscences.'

So much for Sumner. Now for Wade who had signed the Appeal without knowing what it contained! Wade had said that 'he did not consider himself any better than a free negro. I have only to say,' sneered Douglas, 'that I should not have noticed it if none but free negroes had signed it!'

And Seward! He had promptly denied having signed the Appeal — denied any knowledge whatever of it. Yet it had been circulated with Seward's name attached. Very well! 'Who

forged the name of the Senator from New York?' enquired Douglas.

Chase said he did not know.

'Not a satisfactory answer,' exclaimed Douglas, 'from men who had written and published a paper 'filled with insult and calumny,' with forged names attached to give it respectability! It was not enough now for Chase to make a 'technical denial that they committed the crime. Somebody did forge other people's names to that document,' Chase and Sumner 'plead guilty to the authorship and publication;' let them show 'who committed the forgery.'

Dropping 'these personal matters,' which he had made note of only 'in self-defence,' he summed up his argument briefly and closed with an appeal for Western development and for national policies and parties.[1]

'I tell you, sir, you must provide for continuous lines of settlement from the Mississippi Valley to the Pacific Ocean.' And upon what principles — those of popular self-government or those of Congressional interference? The Missouri Compromise was interference; the Compromise of 1850 was self-government, the very heart of American institutions.

The bill was drawn on that principle. It would 'destroy all sectional parties and sectional agitations,' since it would 'withdraw the slavery question from the Halls of Congress and the political arena,' and give it to the people affected by it, and therefore there would be 'nothing left out of which sectional parties can be organized.' Only sectional parties could endanger the Union, and only the slavery question could create such parties. 'When the people of the North shall all be rallied under one banner, and the whole South marshalled under another banner, and each section excited to frenzy and madness by hostility to the institutions of the other, then the patriot may well tremble for the perpetuity of the Union.'

Relegate the slavery question to Territories and States, and

[1] Speaking of Douglas's speech as a whole, the editor of the *Washington Union* who heard all of it, declared that 'it is vain to attempt a description of this really great effort. . . . It may well be ranked with those proud and memorable achievements of intellect which have given the American Senate the just renown of being the ablest deliberative body in the world.' *Washington Union*, March 5, 1854.

'such a catastrophe can never happen. Then you will never be able to tell, by any Senator's vote for or against any measure, from what State or section of the Union he comes.' Why not do this sensible and patriotic thing? Why not 'deprive these agitators of their vocation, and render it impossible for Senators to come here upon bargains on the slavery question?' Nothing but the principles of the Revolution, of the Constitution, of the Great Compromise could restore peace, harmony, and perpetuity to the Union.

'Mr. President, I have not brought this question forward as a Northern man or as a Southern man . . . [but] as an American Senator. . . . I have brought it forward not as an act of justice to the South more than to the North,' but to both, and 'especially . . . to the people of those Territories and . . . States . . . now and in all time to come. . . .

'Northern rights and Southern rights! I know of no such divisions or distinctions under the Constitution.' The bill did equal and exact justice to all sections, all territories, and 'the whole Union.' Enemies of the bill had made none but sectional appeals — not one of them 'would bear repetition one mile across Mason and Dixon's line:' friends of the bill had championed a great national principle 'which can be sustained by the same reasons in every time and in every corner of the Union.' [1]

The historic debate was over. The Senate, exhausted and impatient, was ready to vote. Sumner made no reply as he had said he would. Chase was silent, too. Of course the astute and prudent Seward had nothing to say. But one of the Southern leaders insisted upon the last word. It was nearing five o'clock in the morning when Senator Sam Houston of Texas addressed the Vice President.

Speaking, he said, even as dawn was breaking, he must pro-

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., xxix, Appendix, 325–38. This idea, that opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska bill was sectional and that the principles of that measure were national, was one of the most powerful arguments of supporters of the bill and was strongly and incessantly urged by them.

The *Washington Union*, March 4, 1854, went so far as to say that if the Democrats had joined the Abolitionists as Northern Whigs had done, the Union would have been dissolved almost automatically. Everybody knew that Northern Whigs and some Democrats were now controlled by the Abolitionists and, on that account, were coming out against the bill. *Ib.*, March 7, 1854.

test against the passage of the bill. Behold the tempest of opposition raging throughout the North. That hurricane would not die down. What benefits would the South secure? Not one. 'I want no empty promises. They have not been asked for by the South. . . . Will it [the bill] secure those Territories to the South? No, sir, not at all. . . . Honorable gentlemen from the South . . . characterize it as a miserable, trifling, little measure.' Would that relieve the 'uneasiness' of the South, 'allay the agitation of the North, . . . preserve the Union,' sustain political parties? 'No, sir, they all go to the wall!'

With almost pathetic ardor, the old hero of San Jacinto urged his plea. The South had not asked for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, he repeated: 'I, as the most extreme Southern Senator upon this floor, do not desire it. If it is a boon that is offered to propitiate the South, I, as a Southern man, repudiate it. I reject it. I will have none of it.'

Let harmony be restored and preserved, pleaded Houston. Have regard for a venerated compact. For the sake of the Union, '*maintain the Missouri Compromise!* stir not up agitation! Give us peace!' [1]

Then, at twelve minutes after five o'clock, on the morning of March 4, 1854, the vote was taken, and the Kansas-Nebraska bill passed the Senate by a majority of nearly three to one.[2]

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 338–42.

[2] The vote was thirty-seven aye to fourteen nay. Nine Senators were absent. Of those Bright of Ind., Wright of N.J., Mallory of Fla., Democrats, and Clayton of Del., Pearce of Md., and Toombs of Ga., Whigs, were for the bill; and Everett of Mass., Cooper of Pa., Whigs, and Allen of R.I., Democrat, were against it. There were two vacancies, one from Vermont and one from North Carolina. So that the full Senate stood forty-three for the bill and seventeen against it. The vote is given in *ib.*, XXVIII, 532.

The Northern Senators for the bill were Cass and Stuart of Mich., Dodge and Jones of Iowa, Norris and Williams of N.H., Douglas and Shields of Ill., Pettit of Ind., Gwin and Weller of Cal., Brodhead of Pa., Thomson of N.J., and Toucey of Conn., all Democrats. Only four Northern Democrats voted nay, Dodge and Walker of Wis., Hamlin of Me., and James of R.I.

Two Southern Senators, Houston, Democrat, of Texas, and Bell, Whig, of Tenn. voted against the bill. *Washington Union*, March 7, 1854.

'Look at the list of names in favor of the bill; look at them, men and brethren of the North and of the South. . . . With such leaders, the Union will stand as safe from peril, and last as long as

"The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun."'

Ib., March 5, 1854.

Running messengers shouted the news throughout the slumbering capital. Soon the boom of cannon saluted the event.[1]

In utter despondency, Chase and Sumner slowly walked together down the granite steps of the Capitol out into the haze of coming day.[2] Douglas went home to the repose of victory. Other Senators sought their boarding-houses or hotels, elated or depressed. Yet even at that hour could be heard the thunders which, from New England farms and factories to the prairies of the West, had, for weeks, been gathering in depth and strength, and were soon to come roaring upon Washington and crash about the fearless and defiant Douglas.

By the time the bill was taken up in the House, that body had become well-nigh riotous. The storm aroused in the North by the Appeal had risen to the violence of a hurricane. The language of the opposition was frenzied. In the *Tribune* Greeley declared that it would be better to blow up the Capitol than to permit the diabolical measure to become a law.[3] Without generalship of the highest order and the stimulus of a courage and determination which nothing could shake, the bill could not possibly pass. Douglas supplied that needed daring and resolve.

Every moment of that desperate struggle found him in the House, counselling, inspiring, directing. Floor management of the bill had been placed in charge of the most accomplished parliamentarian in public life, Stephens of Georgia. The skill of that master of rules and procedure even now compels admiration.[4] But the mind and will of Douglas were the controlling and compelling force. At last the bill passed by a majority of thirteen. Pierce added his approval. Thus dawned an epoch in American history, and the career of Lincoln began.

[1] Schuckers, 156. [2] *Ib.*

[3] *Tribune*, May 10, 1854; Cutts, 96–7.

[4] Wilson, II, 400. 'It was admitted, alike by friend and foe, that the management of that severe parliamentary conflict was a most adroit and skilful exhibition of legislative strategy.'

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL MERGER: THE FIRST GREAT SPEECH

It does seem as if at last we should have a North. SUMNER to the Earl of Carlisle.

Efforts are being made to organize a great Northern sectional party. Whether it shall be called Whig, Abolition, Free Soil or Know Nothing, it will be the antagonist of the Democratic party. DOUGLAS: The Philadelphia Speech.

No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. . . . Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong. Stand with the Abolitionist in restoring the Missouri Compromise, and stand against him when he attempts to repeal the Fugitive Slave Law. LINCOLN: The Peoria Speech.

'OH, when will the North be aroused,' wrote Sumner, while the Kansas-Nebraska bill was pending in the House. Let that section take charge of the National Government, he implored.[1]

For a long time this idea of a strictly Northern political organization to combat the South had been advanced, and Sumner was now the boldest and ablest supporter of that sectional plan. Both of the old national parties were incompetent to deal with the one great question of the age, insisted Sumner; 'abandon them and unite against the Despotism of Slavery,' he urged.[2] Greeley was quite as emphatic: 'Organize the North. . . . Elect none but northern Presidents who are *not* doughfaces.'[3]

We are now to witness the merging of associated groups into what finally is to become a compact and militant array, limited to the North — a combination of moral and economic forces, of ancient partisanship and racial prejudice, of industrial philosophy and religious exaltation. A new political party is arising, sectional in membership, national in policies.[4] And we are to see

[1] Sumner 'to a personal friend,' March 30, 1854. *Works*, III, 333.

[2] Sumner to F. W. Bird and James M. Stone, 'Mass. Committee,' May 29, 1854. *Ib.*, 353–4.

[3] New York *Tribune*, March 15, 1854. Italics *Tribune's*. This editorial gravely strengthened the feeling that a Northern political party was to be formed chiefly for the purpose of oppressing the South. *Washington Union*, March 17, 1854.

[4] See *Douglas:* Johnson, 260–2.

The movement for a new party began in Illinois before the Senate passed the Kansas-Nebraska bill. A meeting at Rockford, March 18, adopted a resolution that 'The free

Lincoln's hesitation to fall into the new political alignment, his belated assent, and, finally, his whole-hearted acceptance.

Immediately after the Kansas-Nebraska Act became a law, a theatrical and tragic incident took place which whipped into fury anti-slavery sentiment throughout the North and aroused thousands who, theretofore, had been indifferent to the Fugitive Slave Law or even to the extension of slavery. Still more important, for the purposes of this narrative, that dramatic affair was powerfully influential in bringing into common action those political elements which won in the election of 1854, became steadily stronger thereafter, and soon united into a single political party.

While the debate was raging in the Senate over the Kansas-Nebraska bill, a slave of the name of Anthony Burns, belonging to one Colonel Suttle of Virginia, escaped to Boston. Burns, who was a kind of overseer for his master and had charge of the 'hiring out' of his fellow slaves, had hired himself out as a laborer on vessels at the wharves; it was easy to hide himself in one of the craft, and thus he made his way to the land of freedom. Writing to his brother, the letter reached Suttle, who at once went to Boston to recover his slave.

There was no question as to either identification or ownership. Under the Fugitive Slave Law Burns was seized and delivered to his owner. In the process tremendous excitement sprang up. A mob led by a minister, Thomas W. Higginson, and a free negro broke into the Court House to rescue the fugitive, the Federal officers resisted, a Deputy United States

States should now blot out all former political distinctions by uniting themselves into one great Northern Party.' *Rock River Democrat*, March 28, 1854.

At Freeport, a gathering of 'farmers and mechanics, without distinction of party,' adopted almost identical resolutions. *Illinois Journal*, April 5, 1854.

The Whig or Democratic Party '*never can be*' the party of freedom. *Free West*, May 4, 1854.

The *Chicago Press* deplored the 'organization of a northern party;' it was 'the first part in the program of the disunionists.' As quoted in *Illinois State Register*, Aug. 6, 1854.

Democratic papers said the new party movement was a plot for 'the derangement of our Union, and the establishment of a Northern Confederacy.' *St. Clair Weekly Tribune*, July 22, 1854.

'Unworthy prejudices are excited, the sacred name of Freedom is prostituted by the movers of this scheme, to evoke hatred to the South.' *La Salle Herald* as quoted in *Ottawa Free Trader*, July 1, 1854.

Marshal was killed. The mob withdrew and, after the regular adjudication of the case, Burns, surrounded by many police and Deputy Marshals, and escorted by eleven hundred soldiers, was taken to the wharf and put on board a vessel for Virginia.

It was a picturesque and melancholy procession. Along the route stores were closed, doors and windows draped in black, a coffin labeled 'The Funeral of Liberty' was suspended high above the street, a big flag, turned Union down, was bordered with mourning. The cost to the Government was more than forty thousand dollars — some estimated the expense at one hundred thousand dollars.[1]

It is impossible to overstate the effect of the Burns case on the public mind throughout the North. During the remainder of the year, the New York *Tribune*, which, be it remembered, was widely read in Illinois, was insistent and savage. Other anti-slavery papers were no less severe; anti-slavery speakers stormed. Everywhere the Burns 'outrage' was the subject of talk around firesides, on streets, in offices, and shops. No stronger influence could have been conjured to weld those groups which we are now to see coöperating, and which, when at last finally amalgamated, Lincoln is to lead. Yet, as far as we know, neither in the campaign before us nor ever afterward did he so much as make mention of this notable and historic case.

Having ever in mind, then, the impact on public feeling of the escape, pursuit, and rendition of Anthony Burns, let us observe the forces that operated to defeat the Democratic Party in 1854,

[1] For an impartial account of the Burns case, see Channing, VI, 107–11.

Twelve hundred dollars, the price at which Suttle held the slave, were raised in Boston by subscription; but the U.S. District Attorney refused to permit the sale until the case had been heard and decided, and objected to such a transaction in Massachusetts under any circumstances. The purchase was made, however, after Suttle and the negro reached Virginia, and Burns was sent to Canada where he became a preacher and died seven years after obtaining his freedom.

Four years later, the U.S. Commissioner, Edward G. Loring, who ordered the delivery of Burns to his owner, was removed from a State office on the address of the Legislature, and his license to lecture at the Harvard Law School was revoked. President Buchanan at once appointed Loring to be a Justice of the Court of Claims at Washington, and he served as such until his death in 1877.

Justice Benjamin R. Curtis, of the Supreme Court of the United States, was denounced for seeking the appointment to be Chief Justice by charging the grand jury that the Fugitive Slave Law was constitutional and binding.

brought Lincoln into active political life again and in the end made him President.

'IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD, AND IN HIS PRESENCE,' we 'solemnly protest against the passage of . . . the Nebraska bill,' said three thousand and fifty clergymen of New England in a memorial laid before the Senate, March 14, 1854.[1] This document was based on the Appeal, and, although brief, used some of the words of that historic indictment.

Instantly Douglas was on his feet. The purpose of such petitions, he said, was 'simply to furnish capital for organizing a great sectional party, and trying to draw the whole religious community into their schemes of political aggrandizement.'

'I told you that there would be agitation,' cried Houston. This protest of 'three thousand ministers of the living God upon earth — his vicegerents' — was a vindication of the Texan's foresight.

Since, in the person of its Chaplain, the Senate had an official expert on the subject, sarcastically observed Pettit of Indiana, he moved to refer the ministerial pronouncement to that dignitary, and request 'his official report on this question, as to whether we . . . have invoked the just and righteous judgments of God upon us . . . [laughter].'

With earnestness in notable contrast to Pettit's levity, Douglas declared that the preachers were striving to coerce Congress 'IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD.[2] . . . It involved a great principle, subversive of our free institutions.' But what did that matter to the preachers, since they assumed to be the mouthpiece of the Deity![3]

No, exclaimed Seward, they spoke only as citizens; but, 'being clergymen, being devoted to the . . . cure of souls, [they] have a language of their own.'[4]

The organization which had secured signatures to the New

[1] *Cong. Globe,* 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 617, 621. Capitals those of the Protest.

Harriet Beecher Stowe proposed this remonstrance and paid the expenses of circulating it and sending it to Washington. Pierce, III, 366.

[2] Capitals Douglas's.

[3] Douglas truly said that the New England clerical protest was 'in response to that call which emanated from the Senate' — the Appeal.

[4] *Cong. Globe,* 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. I, 617–23.

England memorial sent a copy of that document to every minister in the North;[1] and, as soon as the Chicago papers published the brief but sharp debate over the New England clerical remonstrance, twenty-five ministers of that city signed an identical protest, but added an even more specific assertion of their celestial agency.[2]

Promptly Douglas answered in a letter to the 'Reverend Gentlemen.' He objected to interference by the organized clergy, as such, with legislation and government, he said.[3] We shall hear Lincoln, in a single brief remark to men of that profession during the war, make the same point, but in a quizzical fashion that everybody instantly understood and laughed at.

Douglas's letter and the Senate debate did not check the clerical onslaught. Soon another rebuke, signed by five hundred and four preachers of the Northwest, the same as that of their Chicago brethren, was sent to Douglas.[4] From almost every pulpit in the North anathema was thundered against him.[5]

Clergymen of that section became political agents working with frenzied sincerity for what they believed a holy cause, and their labors were a mighty force for that amalgamation which created a new political party. Not for an instant did they question the accuracy of the Appeal.[6] Their exclamatory zeal was no greater than their profound integrity. Throughout the conflict about to open in Illinois, well-nigh every preacher was a fiery supporter of the side whose ablest advocate was Lincoln. But Douglas defied them. Thus, in the name of God and Christianity, a power of incalculable strength was arrayed against him and his party.

Yet another tremendous influence entered the struggle at this

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 656. [2] *Ib.*, 653–4.

[3] Douglas to the Chicago preachers, April 6, 1854. *Ib.*, 657–61. The *Washington Sentinel*, April 11, 1854, published Douglas's letter in full with strong editorial endorsement of his attack upon 'preacher politicians.' Many Democratic papers did the same thing.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 653–5.

[5] An example of these sermons is that of Rev. R. H. Richardson, *Wickedness in High Places*, much of which Douglas read to the Senate. *Ib.*, 655–6.

[6] The Appeal was repeated in an Address to the People of the United States issued June 21, 1854, by members of the House who had opposed the Kansas-Nebraska bill. It was printed in the *Illinois Journal*, June 27, 1854. While this address made the same points as the Appeal, it was dull and verbose.

fateful hour, an element intimately related to the clergy. This was the secret political order popularly called the Know-Nothing Party.[1] It was the outcome of a nativist and Protestant movement against foreigners, against Roman Catholics, and, at the last and in the North, against slavery. It became historically noticeable soon after the beginning of the abolition assault.

The outstanding and immediate cause of this nativist-Protestant agitation, was the heavy and increasing immigration from Europe.[2] Most of these immigrants, especially the Irish, were Roman Catholics.[3] In New York, Philadelphia, and Boston the 'foreigners' took an active and, to the native born, an offensive part in politics. There were conflicts between Protestants and Catholics over school funds in New York, and the idea was advanced and spread rapidly that the Papacy and European monarchies were conspiring to overthrow American institutions and the Protestant faith.

Many secret societies had sprung up in aggressive hostility to what their members ardently believed to be this plot against the Republic and the religion of the Fathers, and these secret lodges became volcanic centres of nativist and Protestant propaganda. The Sons of '76, the United Americans, the Sons of the Sires, the American Republican Party,[4] and other like designations were the names adopted by these organizations. One of

[1] For an exhaustive and accurate account of the Nativist movement and its development into the Know-Nothing Party, see *Political Nativism in New York State:* Louis Dow Scisco.

A shorter but excellent treatment of the whole subject is the *Know-Nothing Party:* Humphrey J. Desmond. Also see *History of the Know-Nothing Party in Maryland:* Laurence Frederick Schmeckebier; and 'Know-Nothingism in Rhode Island,' Charles Stickney. *Procd'g's. R.I. Hist. Socy.*, 1892–93. For a lucid statement of nativism and the Know-Nothings, see Channing, VI, 129–38.

All statements in the sketch given in the text are from these authorities, except those from newspapers cited.

[2] Up to 1820, an average of 10,000 immigrants entered the United States annually. Thereafter the number increased rapidly, and became very great from 1845 to 1850, owing largely to the Irish famine. During these five years about 1,700,000 immigrants came to America. Desmond, 13–4.

[3] They were Democrats, too, because of their conception of Jackson's picturesque defeat of the British at New Orleans and the fact that he was a Democrat. *Ib.*, 24.

[4] Within four years from its organization in 1843, the American Republican Party broke up into several groups, such as the Good Fellows, the Red Men, the Druids, the Foresters, etc. Scisco, 62.

them, a society of young men formed to do street fighting, was called the 'Wide Awakes,' from their rallying cry.[1] This term survived and was applied to the marching clubs that carried torches and cheered belligerently in the campaigns which we are soon to review.

From the first these nativist and religious secret orders had affiliated with the Whigs, although Seward, when Governor of New York, had taken the side of the immigrants and Catholics in one of the many controversies over education, and steadily thereafter disapproved of the movement [2] — an attitude which, years afterward, cost him the nomination for the Presidency. Greeley, too, was opposed to it,[3] and so were Giddings and Wade. But, in general and strikingly, it was closely associated with the Whigs. The Democratic press of the country opposed this proscriptive movement from the time of its first open political activities; [4] it was, said many Democratic papers, a phase of the same state of mind that produced abolitionism.[5]

Late in 1853 these anti-foreign and anti-Catholic secret societies combined into a single political party, the Know-Nothings.[6] Many forces brought about this sudden coalition. One among them was the disintegration of the Whig Party which was then going on rapidly. Whigs who did not want to join their ancient enemies, the Democrats, embraced the new and mysterious organization.

Thus most Southern Whigs became Know-Nothings, but the

[1] The official name of the Wide Awakes was 'The Order of Free and Accepted Americans.' It was organized in New York City in 1854 by a young man of the name of William W. Patten. The members wore light felt hats when on their forays or parades. Scisco, 94–5.

[2] In the Senate, July 12, 1854. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXVIII, Pt. III, 1708–9. Seward so mercilessly assailed the order that the *Washington Sentinel*, although violently opposed to him, applauded his speech. July 15, 1854.

[3] The New York *Tribune* for 1854–55 contains constant attacks upon the Know-Nothings and their principles.

[4] *Hartford* (Conn.) *Times*, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 11, 1844, and many Democratic papers of the time.

[5] *Washington Union*, Aug. 18, 1853; *Indiana State Sentinel*, May 30, June 29; *Washington Sentinel*, June 6, 1854, and the Democratic press generally for that and succeeding years.

[6] The official name of the party was, 'The Order of the Star Spangled Banner.' Greeley gave them the name of Know-Nothings. Desmond, 52–3.

order did not long survive in that section.[1] The great bulk of immigrants had gone North and West and the number of 'foreigners' in the South, while considerable, was very small in comparison; and, except in Louisiana, Maryland, and Florida, there were few Catholics in the slave States. Southern Know-Nothings, moreover, were emphatically for slavery, while most Northern members of the party finally came to oppose it. For these reasons this nativist and religious political party soon expired in the South.

In the North, however, its growth was speedy and prodigious during 1854. It swept New England, would have carried New York but for the astuteness of Seward and Weed, and it captured several Northern cities. The Protestant clergy were its most effective supporters; in some cities street preachers had long been proclaiming its doctrines; anti-Catholic and anti-foreign riots had been incited; and now in Massachusetts several ministers were elected, as Know-Nothings, to the Legislature which was almost solidly Know-Nothing. Henry Wilson, who had joined the order, was thus chosen as Sumner's colleague in the National Senate.[2]

Large numbers of Democrats who left their party because of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise also became Know-Nothings, almost automatically. They were in much the same case as were Free-Soilers and Whigs; being without a party, they drifted into the movement with which, on the whole, they were in harmony. Thus these 'anti-Nebraska Democrats,' as they were called, found themselves members of the secret order, and small was the Northern town that did not have a Know-Nothing lodge.[3]

The slogan of the Know-Nothings was 'Americans must rule America;' its leading principle, 'No Papacy in the Republic.' It demanded that immigration be restricted, that prolonged residence be required before an alien could be naturalized, that the

[1] For a contemporary account of the principles of the party in the South, see *The American Party, its Principles, its Objects and its Hopes:* An Address by Geo. Robertson, 1855.

[2] Pierce, III, 400–2.

[3] The Know-Nothing Party 'was a stepping-stone for many voters into the anti-Nebraska, and subsequently the Republican organization.' Schuckers: 161.

Bible be read and taught in the public schools, that no church schools for children be permitted and, above all, that no Catholic be elected to any office.[1]

The Know-Nothings were strongest and most violent in the cities, especially in those where immigrants were numerous or where these hated 'foreigners' had gone, before settling in various parts of the country. In these 'immigrant depots' the native workingmen were particularly hostile, since the newcomers were competitors, and almost to a man these 'American' laborers were members of Know-Nothing lodges. In Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago they were an important element of the Know-Nothing strength.

In May, 1854, the secret political party elected the Mayor and city officials of Philadelphia by a majority of over eight thousand.[2] It was a political revolution, and was loudly and widely proclaimed as a popular rebuke to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Democratic press, however, insisted that the Philadelphia upheaval was an exclusively Know-Nothing triumph;[3] and this appraisal was the more accurate. Opponents of the mysterious power that had so suddenly and unexpectedly seized the local government were dazed and alarmed.

On July 4, Douglas stopped in Philadelphia on his way from New York to Washington, and he was asked to make a speech. He consented, but only on condition that he would be allowed to denounce Know-Nothingism and defend the Kansas-Nebraska law. A sectional party was being formed, said Douglas, the heart of which was 'a secret society bound together by the most solemn and terrible oaths.' Yet religious freedom was the very corner-stone in the 'temple of our liberties. [Tremendous cheers.]' So let all Democrats stand together against the 'allied

[1] For a contemporary defence of the Know-Nothings, see *The Sons of the Sires; a History . . . of the American Party*, by An American. Philadelphia, 1855. The *Indiana State Sentinel*, July 13, 1854, contains a condensed and accurate statement of the 'American Platform.'

[2] The *Sons of the Sires* said that nearly all the officials thus put out of office were Irish. Desmond, 15.

[3] *Washington Union*, June 9, 1854. Also *Washington Sentinel*, June 9, 1854. 'Know-nothingism will turn out to be a fusion of northern whigs, abolitionists, and free-soilers . . . an amalgamation of all the odds and ends and isms of the country.' Also *ib.*, June 17, 1854.

forces of Abolitionism, Whiggism, Nativeism, and religious intolerance, under whatever name and on whatever field they may present themselves. [Enthusiastic cheers and tremendous applause.]' [1]

Such was Douglas's denunciation of the Know-Nothings when they were sweeping upward to the climax of their power. It was the first speech made against them by an eminent public man, and it rallied the national Democracy, as a party, to the standard thus raised by that daring leader. But his Philadelphia speech was, from his point of view, to produce an unhappy repercussion in Chicago and throughout Illinois.

Almost at the same time that the Know-Nothings startled the land with their vast and hidden power, a mighty wave of temperance reform poured over the country. For more than a score of years a crusade against the evils of drink had been carried on throughout the nation.[2] Professional lecturers, employed by various communities or supported by the offerings of temperance 'revival meetings,' had spoken everywhere; and temperance periodicals, pamphlets, books, and plays were almost as numerous and aggressive as those of the Abolitionists or the Know-Nothings.[3]

This reform movement was as strong in the South as in the North; but in the North it was anti-slavery, and Northern temperance lecturers and abolition speakers joined in lurid descriptions of the twin Demons. Many societies were organized

[1] Sheahan, 264–71. Douglas's speech was printed in full in the *Washington Sentinel*, July 18, 1854, with approving editorial comment. Thereafter that radical Democratic organ constantly attacked Know-Nothingism and the Know-Nothing Party. See *Washington Sentinel* for last half of 1854 and for 1855.

[2] For account of the anti-drink movement, see 'Temperance and Progress of the Century:' John G. Woolley and William E. Johnson, 109–27, being Vol. XXIV of the *Nineteenth Century*. As early as 1829 Lyman Beecher and other reformers were demanding prohibition. *Ib.*, 115. Also see *A Century of Drink Reform:* August F. Fehlandt (N. Y. 1904).

[3] Three books, published during this period, had profound and wide-spread effect on public opinion. They were *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*, anti-Catholic; *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, Temperance; and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Abolition.

Notwithstanding exposure by Protestant clergymen of Maria Monk as an impostor and her book, written by Rev. J. J. Slocum, as a volume of lies, it had a prodigious influence, and it continued to be published for many years. So great were the profits, that other salacious stories of the same character were published. See Desmond, 16, *et seq.*

to wage war upon strong drink, and one or another of them had penetrated into every county in the North.[1]

In 1851 the celebrated Maine Liquor Law was passed by the Legislature of that State, and was soon adopted throughout New England. Agitation for the enactment of this prohibition statute was vigorous in other sections. As we have seen, the temperance movement had been active while Lincoln was in the Legislature; by 1853 the question had become acute. During the campaign of 1854 in Illinois, prohibition was scarcely less influential than Know-Nothingism or the Kansas-Nebraska Act itself.[2] At some places in the State the campaign for the Maine Law was so ardent that violence was resorted to.[3]

Practically all immigrants from whatever country were against it, however, as were large numbers of native-born Americans. Thus a situation was created, to handle which sorely puzzled politicians, especially those who strove to capture for the new party great sections of foreigners, particularly the Germans. For these German immigrants had promptly and militantly responded to the Appeal and become an almost solid phalanx against the extension of slavery.[4] In fact the Germans

[1] For example: the Washingtonians, 1840; the Sons of Temperance, 1842; the Rechabites, 1842; the Cadets of Temperance (youths), 1845; the Templars of Honour and Temperance, 1845; the Good Samaritans, 1847; the Independent Order of Good Templars, 1851; etc. Woolley and Johnson, 87–109.

[2] In 1853 the Ill. Cent. R.R. threw its strength in favor of the adoption of the Maine Law, refused to transport liquor and required its agents to examine all boxes, casks, and barrels and reject them if they contained liquor. *Belleville Advocate*, Aug. 17, 1853.

'Temperance men, and temperance societies wield an immense influence in this State, and will crush any party that should openly oppose them.' *Alton Daily Courier*, Nov. 18, 1853, Feb. 24, 1854.

[3] The 'Temperance men' sometimes forcibly broke into groceries and storehouses, smashed barrels and casks, threatened liquor sellers, etc. *Illinois Journal*, April 1, 1854; *Peru* (Ill.) *Daily Chronicle*, April 28, 1854.

[4] 'No class of citizens have manifested more indignation at Douglas's scheme for extending slavery over the vast territory of Nebraska, than our immigrant and native Germans.' *Free West*, May 18, 1854. And see resolutions of a German meeting at Chicago. *Chicago Daily Democrat*, March 17, 1854. Also *ib.*, March 14, 1854.

'The whole German press and German population of the country . . . are against the proposition to establish slavery . . . over the great region of Nebraska.' *Illinois Journal*, March 15, 1854.

'The proposition to send slavery into the free territories . . . has aroused the indignation of the German press with hardly a single exception.' *Belleville Advocate*, March 8, 1854.

'The Germans . . . are to hold an anti-Nebraska Convention at Bloomington on the 12th and 13th of this month.' *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 12, 1854.

were a vital if not indispensable element of the new political alignment now forming: without them that organization could not have succeeded, and this was of first importance in Lincoln's political career from this time forward.

In general, the temperance movement coincided and co-operated with the nativist movement; and the Protestant ministry was as ardent for prohibition as it was for freedom. The decade before the Civil War was, in the North, a period of protest and reform; and while each group was intent on the accomplishment of its particular idea, all were for some innovation. More and more these elements were drawn into closer association, and the sentiment common to them all was hatred of slavery and opposition to the South.[1]

Another force operated to combine all parties and factions, antagonistic to the dominant political power in charge of the Government. That force was hard times. Toward the end of 1854 a financial depression was well under way which three years later became one of the economic catastrophes of American history. As we have seen, that depression was particularly severe in Illinois.[2] The usual resentment toward the party in power followed this collapse of prosperity and heavily influenced elections.

Moreover, there had been scandals and financial mismanagement. 'The people are determined to clean out the Augean stables,' wrote a farmer to an Illinois paper.[3] Farmers and workingmen were beginning to demand class favors from the Government.[4] When estimating the factors that finally merged into the Republican Party, serious account must be taken of the agrarian and industrial elements.

The shipping interests of Chicago had a special grievance. Harbor improvements, which they sharply needed and had

[1] 'The whigs, free-soilers, temperance men, and know-nothings, are to merge all interests into the one all-absorbing object of Nebraska repeal, and a furious attack on slavery.' *Washington Sentinel*, July 16, 1854.

[2] See Chapters IX and X of vol. I of this work.

[3] *Belleville Advocate*, Sept. 13, 1854.

[4] 'It is the duty of the Governor of each free State to provide for the education of its farmers and mechanics in the line of their own occupation.' Resolution of a new party convention at Ottawa, Ill., Aug. 30, 1854, as reported by a correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, clipped in the *Free West*, Sept. 7, 1854.

energetically demanded, had not been made or provided for. Douglas had voted against the bill and Pierce had vetoed it.[1] Not a captain, engineer, or deckhand of any lake steamboat or sailing craft which tied up to Chicago docks, but was at that time a fighting enemy of the Little Giant; not a longshoreman but was his foe. Practically every man of them who was native born was a Know-Nothing, and all were against the institution of slavery. The same was true of those engaged in river commerce on the upper Mississippi; and, as we shall see, this fact had an appreciable influence in the approaching elections in Iowa and Illinois.

There was, in short, an accumulation of every force and influence that made for the overthrow of the existing political order. Even the soldiers of the War of 1812, their families, and friends, were clamoring for Government largess and were dissatisfied because they did not get it.[2]

Seldom has a public man ever faced so many hostile and even bellicose elements as those that confronted Douglas in Chicago and throughout Illinois in the late summer and early fall of 1854; and these forces persisted and grew stronger until, four years later, when other powerful influences were added to them, they seemed overwhelming and irresistible.

The entire press of Chicago had been bitterly hostile to Douglas until August, 1854, when a paper so friendly to him that he was charged with the ownership of it was started. It was called the *Chicago Times* and was edited by James W. Sheahan, a journalist of Washington.[3] To this paper, to the editor's per-

[1] The River and Harbor bill of 1854 made appropriations for improving the harbors of Dubuque, Ia., Chicago, etc., also for improving navigation on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, and many other streams; and for the betterment of navigation of the great lakes. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., XXIX, Appendix, 1145–6.

The bill was debated for three days. *Ib.*, 1145–210. Douglas finally voted against it, because the appropriations affecting Illinois and Iowa rivers and harbors were too small even to begin the necessary improvements. Pierce vetoed the bill because it reached him too late for careful examination, because some appropriations were purely local, and because of doubtful constitutionality. At the opening of the next session, he sent another comprehensive and able message on the subject. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 256–71.

[2] The demand was that one hundred and sixty acres of land be granted to each soldier. *Aurora Guardian*, April 6; *Ottawa Free Trader*, May 27; *Rock River Democrat*, May 30, 1854.

[3] 'Our talented townsman.' *Washington Sentinel*, Sept. 7, 1854. See Lincoln's note in *Works*, VIII, 292.

sonal statements, and to Douglas's comment five years after the stirring scene we are now to witness, we owe the accounts favorable to him.

Soon after Congress adjourned in August Douglas went home. He afterward declared that he could have travelled from Boston to Chicago by the light of the burning effigies of himself. He was called 'Traitor Arnold,' 'Judas,' and similar names.[1] Ever since his report of the Nebraska bill and the circulation of the Appeal, a savage agitation against him and the measure he championed had been carried on, and in Chicago and Northern Illinois it was especially virulent. From the time he rebuked the Chicago preachers, the clergy had assailed him incessantly and with personal bitterness; and, after his denunciation of the Know-Nothings in his Philadelphia speech, the hostility to Douglas in Chicago was dangerously inflamed.

So menacing and perilous was the public temper that friends advised Douglas to stay away. He ignored their timid but well-grounded counsel, arrived at Chicago about August 25, and soon announced that he would speak at North Market Hall on the night of September 1. 'They threaten a mob but I have no fears. All will be right,' Douglas wrote to Lanphier from Chicago.[2] His supporters afterward maintained, and so did Douglas to his dying day, that carefully organized preparations had been made to insult and humiliate him publicly 'and, if possible, to prevent his being heard.'[3]

The hostile press told its readers to attend the meeting and not again 'to allow him to deceive the people by his sophistries.' One paper, appealing directly to the prejudices of the Know-Nothings, announced that 'Mr. Douglas had selected a body-guard of five hundred Irishmen, who, with arms in their hands, were to be present, and compel . . . silence while he spoke.' Next day another journal spoke darkly of 'a season of violence . . . every revolver and pistol in the stores of the city had been sold, and there were orders for a large number yet unfilled.'[4]

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 258.

[2] Aug. 25, 1854, Lanphier MSS. 'Please give the notice in your paper [of the time and place of the Chicago meeting] as I have received many letters asking to be informed of the time of the meeting. Come up if you can and bring our friends with you.'

[3] Sheahan, 271. [4] *Ib.*, 272.

Some years afterward, Douglas himself asserted that long before the meeting the Know-Nothings had wired to New York for firearms. The belief was strongly impressed on the general mind that violence would occur when Douglas tried to speak and that he 'intended to overawe the public by an armed demonstration.' [1] Whatever the cause, the mob spirit had been created, and was revealed hours before the time of the meeting.

At one o'clock that afternoon flags on several boats at the docks were lowered to half-mast. At dusk church bells began to toll all over the city, and the melancholy message continued to be rung until Douglas appeared. It was one of the hottest nights Chicago ever had experienced, and the meeting was held in the square instead of in the Hall.[2] Eight thousand excited people, nearly all of them men, densely packed the space before the speaker's stand. Hundreds crowded windows and balconies, and even stood on roofs of adjacent houses. In that turbulent assembly, Sheahan says, many Know-Nothings 'were armed to the teeth.'

Ominous silence greeted Douglas when he began to speak; but after a few sentences 'a storm of hisses' arose. The opposition press declared that Douglas flew into a rage and hurled insults at his tormentors; [3] his friends insisted that he was unmoved, calm, determined. He managed to utter a few more sentences — the crowd did not understand the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he said, because the papers that had assailed it and abused him had not published it. Hisses, cat-calls, boos, and vile epithets were the response. His friends in the crowd were so angered that they wanted to fight. Douglas restrained them — he would deal with the mob himself. The editor of the *Chicago Times* testifies, that some of the armed Know-Nothings afterward told him 'that nothing prevented bloodshed that night but the bold and defiant manner in which Douglas maintained his ground.' [4]

Amid groans, yells, derisive songs, Douglas read, so loudly that it was 'heard above the infernal din,' a letter warning him

[1] Cutts, 98. [2] All Chicago papers of Sept. 2–4, 1854.

[3] *Chicago Daily Democrat, Chicago Tribune,* Sept. 2, 3, 4, 1854; *Free West,* Sept. 7, 1854.

[4] Sheahan, 272–3.

that if he spoke he would be roughly handled.[1] In high temper he denounced the *Tribune* for having caused the disturbance — cheers for that paper were the response. He had come there to speak and would stay until the crowd would hear him, thundered Douglas.

> 'We won't go home till morning, till morning, till morning,
> We won't go home till morning, till daylight doth appear,'

sang his tormentors, and cheered vociferously.[2]

Time and again Douglas was asked why he had voted against the River and Harbor bill, but he stuck to his idea of trying to talk about popular sovereignty. He managed, however, to denounce the Know-Nothings, 'for which he received no lack of groans.'[3] Finally, after more than two hours of futile effort, Douglas gave up and left the stand. For the first time in his life he had suffered humiliation and defeat. Guarded by friends, he made his way through the crowd and went to the Tremont House, followed by shouted insult and execration.[4]

Such was the beginning of Douglas's fight for the Kansas-Nebraska Act in Illinois in the autumn of 1854. News of that savagely picturesque event was published throughout the

[1] Sheahan, 273. [2] *Free West*, Sept. 7, 1854.

[3] *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 2, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, Sept. 5, 1854.

[4] From the time of the final passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, it was said that Douglas would be mobbed on his return to Chicago. *Illinois State Register*, June 15, 1854.

In announcing Douglas's arrival in Chicago, the *Tribune* said: If 'he attempts to get up what he calls a "vindication" of his crimes; if he collects around him a crowd of Irish rowdies and grog-house politicians, and attempts to send forth their approbation as "the voice of the people of Chicago," it will not be our fault if he arouses a lion which he cannot tame.' Clipped in the *Washington Sentinel*, Sept. 1, 1854.

The *Chicago Daily Democratic Press* (anti-Douglas), Sept. 4, clipped in *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 5, 1854, said that, while preparations had been made to prevent Douglas from speaking, the cause of the tumult was his offensive manner, bearing, and words; and that provocative threats of his friends, before his return to Chicago, had stirred up bad feeling.

Rival accounts were printed in the *Chicago Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 2, and were republished in the *Illinois State Register*, Sept. 4 and 5, 1854. Both stories are highly partisan and prejudiced, that of the *Times* being wrathful and that of the *Tribune* exultant; but, in the main, both agree as to the tumultuous disorder in the crowd.

Three days later the *Tribune*, Sept. 4, published an alarming statement under the caption 'DOUGLAS NOT YET SATISFIED,' that Douglas intended to speak that afternoon at Dearborn Park and 'attempt, then and there, to excuse his efforts to defeat the River and Harbor bill, and thus prevent the repairing of the piers and our harbor, whereby the lives of hundreds of our mariners are yearly perilled. This issue he dodged entirely on

United States. Generally the press condemned the outrage,[1] but many papers approved it. The demonstration was but the natural outburst of the people's wrath against the betrayer of liberty to the Slave Power, they said; nothing but the inevitable explosion of righteous public indignation at the base truckler to Southern Aristocracy, who had broken a 'sacred compact' and sacrificed freedom to gain the Presidency.

The Democratic press throughout Illinois bitterly denounced the Chicago disturbance. Here, said Democratic editors, was an example of Abolition-Whig-Free-Soil-Know-Nothing devotion to liberty; those political allies loved it so much that they suppressed freedom of speech and suppressed it by mob violence; they cared so much for negroes that they would not permit white men to talk about the American Constitution.[2] They dared not let Douglas speak for fear that he would repeat his triumph of four years earlier.[3] As long as he lived, Douglas himself insisted that the riot was the work of the Know-Nothings.[4]

But the Chicago demonstration did not dismay him — rather it stimulated him. Quickly he plunged into the campaign throughout the State, first going to the strong 'anti-Nebraska' counties adjacent to Chicago.[5] Everywhere he was received with indignity and insult. Burning effigies of himself hanging by the neck, offensive mottoes, and placards greeted his arrival at many towns. Often the Chicago tactics were attempted, but never again were they successful, for Douglas was heard.[6]

Friday night. Do not permit this scheme to circumvent you. Leave for two hours, your workshops and your labor, and turn out once more to give a final blow to the traitor. . . . CITIZENS AND SAILORS, *Turn Out! Do not permit this to be done* [endorsement of Douglas]! YOU CAN PREVENT IT AND YOU WILL DO IT.' Clipped in *Washington Sentinel*, Sept. 8, 1854.

Douglas's paper, the *Times*, said nothing about such a proposed meeting, and, except for the *Tribune's* story, no evidence has been discovered that this second meeting was ever planned or contemplated.

[1] The *Washington Union* during Sept., 1854, printed large numbers of editorial denunciations by papers all over the country. Old line Whig papers, like the *National Intelligencer* (Weekly, Sept. 16, 1854), also condemned the Chicago mob.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Sept. 4, 5, 1854. [3] Sheahan, 273–4.

[4] Douglas's statement in Cutts, 98. And see *Douglas:* Johnson, 263–4.

[5] Before beginning his Illinois campaign, Douglas spoke to a great Democratic Mass Meeting at Indianapolis on the afternoon of Sept. 6, 1854. *Indiana State Sentinel*, Sept. 7, 1854; and *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Sept. 6, 1854.

[6] Sheahan, 274.

Always his speech was the same — the basic American principle of local self-government; the development of the West; the sectional nature of the Missouri Compromise and yet the refusal of Northern Whigs, Free-Soilers, and Abolitionists to observe even the line of that measure; his own attempts, as a matter of good faith, to stop slavery agitation, to extend the Missouri line to the Pacific, and the defeat of his efforts; the abandonment of a sectional and adoption of a national principle by the Great Compromise; the logical, natural, and necessary application of that principle to Kansas and Nebraska; the impossibility, as a practical matter, that slavery could long exist in Kansas or Nebraska because of soil, climate, and the resultant products of agriculture.[1]

Nor did Douglas ever fail to assail the Know-Nothings.[2] These attacks inflamed still more the anger which his Philadelphia speech had aroused, and retaliation continued. It was charged that Douglas advocated Roman Catholicism as the only true religion; that he asserted that foreigners deserved better treatment than 'descendants of revolutionary sires;'[3] that his 'coarsest and most abusive epithets' were showered upon the Know-Nothings.[4] 'Douglas cursed the Christian in the United States senate,' and 'he cursed the true American' in Philadelphia, wrote an anonymous contributor to the *Illinois Journal*.[5]

Incessantly the charge was reiterated that Douglas was a slave-holder, and that the purpose of his advocacy of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was to swell his private fortune by increasing the demand for slaves. This accusation, indeed, was

[1] Douglas's Senate speech had been printed in pamphlet form and widely circulated in Illinois. *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 29, 1854.

Douglas's campaign speech, as finally perfected, was made in Chicago, Nov. 9, 1854, and appears in full in the Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 2, 1854. In this speech he also attacked the Republican Party, then forming, as purely sectional.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Sept. 15, 18, 1854, etc.

[3] *La Salle Watchman*, quoted with approval by the *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 25, 1854. The *Journal* again printed this story, Oct. 11, 1854. It had great influence with the Know-Nothing and Protestant vote.

[4] *Bloomington Pantagraph*, in *ib.*, Oct. 2, 1854.

[5] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 3, 1854. The Democratic organ reprinted this statement as 'only one of the proofs of the depths of lying mendacity and reckless partisan malice which abolition-fusion-know-nothingism has reached.'

brought against Douglas all over the North. One paper printed a careful analysis of his alleged slave property, showing that, if Kansas became slave territory, he would make ten thousand dollars because of the increased price of slaves.[1] On the stump Douglas ignored this accusation; but when the same charge was made in the Senate, he made frank but scathing answer.

Indeed, it was claimed to be Douglas's intention 'to become a citizen of the South in due time,' because he owned a plantation in Mississippi.[2] If his organ, the *Illinois State Register*, would only print the number of Douglas's slaves, challenged the *Illinois Journal*, which was no less Lincoln's organ, the information would show Douglas's 'peculiar interest' in Southern institutions.[3]

Polygamy was made an issue: it was said that Douglas's principle of local popular sovereignty would permit Utah to foster that institution and, finally, to come into the Union as a polygamous State. The *Illinois Journal*[4] charged that Major Thomas L. Harris, the Democratic candidate for Congress in the Springfield district, had said that he would vote to admit Utah with polygamy, because every State and Territory must decide domestic questions for itself. Thereafter the anti-Douglas press and speakers thundered against Mormonism as an evil which the Kansas-Nebraska law protected as much as

[1] *St. Louis Intelligencer*, clipped in *Illinois Daily Journal*, Sept. 23, 1854.

On Oct. 10, 1854, the *Illinois Journal* reprinted from the *Southern Journal* a description of a barbecue for the slaves on the Douglas plantation. The same account by a guest was published in the *Washington Union*, August 19, 1853.

The barbecue, an annual celebration given by the overseer, was typical of the Southern custom — over-abundance of meats, fish newly caught in river and lake, many kinds of cake in great quantities, etc. The plantation slaves, one hundred and forty in number, ate joyously, the women 'ordering the delighted waiters with fastidious taste,' etc.

All of the slaves were 'dressed cleanly, and some of them almost elegantly.' The slave children 'crammed in the food, and more particularly the cake, in a pure repletion of animal enjoyment.' They were clad in 'white cotton shirts, the old familiar plantation dress for the children of the South — white as well as black. Here was *comfort*, *health*, and *happiness* displayed.'

This witness says that he personally saw what he narrates, and he added much comment about the treatment and condition of Douglas's slaves in contrast to the situation and experience of white laborers in the North; and 'this was not an isolated instance of the southerner's humanity to the slave — but that it was the same everywhere — over the full length and breadth of the beautiful and smiling South.'

[2] Washington Correspondence of *New York Express*, reprinted in *Illinois Journal*, June 21, 1854.

[3] *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 18, 1854. [4] Sept. 14, 1854.

the twin wickedness of slavery.[1] In vain the Democratic organ denounced the 'Utah Humbug.'[2] Polygamy continued to be a popular argument against the doctrine of Congressional non-intervention.

To these and similar charges Lincoln paid no heed. But other speakers did, and the anti-Douglas press was burdened with savage references to Douglas's advocacy of Catholicism, his ownership of slaves, his partiality to Mormonism. All these things and the other influences described went to swell the current running heavily against him and the Democratic Party. For an understanding of this and succeeding campaigns, it cannot be repeated too often that, second only to the issue of slavery extension, were the associated issues of polygamy, prohibition, Catholicism, nativism, economic depression, and the demand for river and harbor improvements.[3]

As the campaign progressed, Whig and Free-Soil newspapers grew ever more friendly to the Know-Nothings; [4] and the Whig press also rapidly advanced toward the anti-slavery position of Seward and Greeley.[5] The Democratic organ charged that the *Illinois Journal* was 'gradually throwing off all disguise of its sympathy with the faction of religious intolerance — know-nothingism.' [6]

On June 14, Fillmore, who was making the usual political tour

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 20, 23, 28, etc., 1854. The *Journal* tried to fasten on the Democratic candidate the name of 'Polygamy Harris' (Sept. 28, Oct. 30, 31, 1854), and once (Sept. 29, 1854) called him 'Polygamous Harris.'

Harris denied that he favored the admission of Utah with polygamy and said that he hated the Mormons and would crush them; but, he insisted, they had a constitutional right to govern themselves. *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 5, 1854. Harris was elected.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 5, 1854.

[3] The *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, Oct. 14, 1854, said that prohibition and know-nothingism were exceedingly influential in the campaign.

The *Aurora Guardian*, Nov. 2, 1854, said that slavery, polygamy, grog shops, and a hundred other evils of like quality, were elements of the contest.

Throughout the campaign all Chicago papers, excepting the *Times*, assailed the veto of the River and Harbor bill. For example, *Chicago Democratic Press*, clipped in *Illinois Journal*, Aug. 10, 1854.

[4] 'We know nothing of such a society.' *Illinois Daily Journal*, July 25, Sept. 6, Sept. 16, 1854. Also see *Ottawa Weekly Republican*, Oct. 7, 1854; *Joliet Signal*, Aug. 15, 1854; *Canton Weekly Register*, Nov. 9, 1854.

[5] 'They think that by combining the abolition strength with the whigs, they can triumph over the democracy.' *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 22, 1854.

[6] *Ib.*, Oct. 17, 1854.

of the country, arrived in Springfield. He was the last Whig President, and, next to Seward, the most eminent man in the party. He was already a candidate for the Whig nomination for President in 1856, and was ardently sympathetic with the Know-Nothing, or, as many insisted on calling it, the American movement. As the foremost Whig in Springfield, Lincoln introduced Fillmore to a big crowd that gathered at the station.[1]

In spite of all obstacles, however, Douglas made headway. His audiences grew in size and friendliness. Not later than September Lincoln entered the campaign.[2] He had prepared with uncommon thoroughness, even for him. He had studied the debates in Congress, and as we have seen, Douglas's speech in the Senate had been printed in pamphlet form as well as published in the newspapers. For weeks, Lincoln had spent toilsome hours in the State Library, searching trustworthy histories, analyzing the Census, mastering the facts, reviewing the literature of the subject.[3] In his office he had written fragments on government and scraps of arguments against slavery, obviously trying to clarify his reasoning.[4]

Moreover, he had written several editorials for the *Illinois Journal*. Herndon tells us that he and Lincoln often did this, and it is not hard to detect the writing of each man.[5] An editorial entitled 'NEGRO POWER'[6] is probably Lincoln's: it states in his plain and simple style the injustice of counting slaves in determining the basis of representation in Congress. Another editorial, 'THE 14TH SECTION,'[7] is undoubtedly by Lincoln. It explains the effect of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. After a succinct statement of the law, the editorial continues:

'Abraham Lincoln has a fine meadow, containing beautiful

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 15, 1854. The *Journal* barely made mention of Fillmore's visit, June 14, 1854.

[2] He spoke at Carrollton, Aug. 28, and at Jacksonville, Sept. 2. *Ib.*, Sept. 1, 6, 1854. He argued for the restoration of the Missouri Compromise and against the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law.

[3] *Ib.*, Oct. 6, 1854. [4] *Works*, II, 182–7.

[5] 'I frequently wrote the editorials in the Springfield [*Illinois*] *Journal*, the editor . . . giving to Lincoln and to me the utmost liberty in that direction. . . . Lincoln and I both kept on furnishing political matter . . . for the Springfield *Journal* until 1860. Many of the editorials that I wrote were intended directly or indirectly to promote the interest of Lincoln.' Herndon, II, 367–9.

[6] Oct. 7, 1854. [7] Sept. 11, 1854.

springs of water, and well fenced, which John Calhoun had agreed with Abraham (originally owning the land in common) should be his, and the agreement had been consummated in the most solemn manner, regarded by both as sacred. . . .

'John Calhoun then looks with a longing eye on Lincoln's meadow, and goes to it and throws down the fences, and exposes it to the ravages of his starving and famishing cattle.

'"You rascal," says Lincoln, "what have you done? what do you do this for?"

'"Oh," replies Calhoun, "everything is right. I have taken down your fence; but nothing more. It is my true intent and meaning not to drive my cattle into your meadow, nor to exclude them therefrom, but to leave them perfectly free to form their own notions of the feed, and to direct their movements in their own way."

'Now would not the man who committed this outrage be deemed both a knave and a fool — a knave in removing the restrictive fence, which he had solemnly pledged himself to sustain; and a fool in supposing that there could be one man found in the country to believe that he had not pulled down the fence for the purpose of opening the meadow for his cattle?' [1]

During the summer Chase, Giddings, Cassius M. Clay, Ichabod Codding, and a host of anti-slavery crusaders had spoken all over the State; [2] and, by the beginning of fall, large numbers of local orators were on the stump. Many anti-slavery and anti-Nebraska speakers also made appeals for the enactment of the Maine Law by the next Legislature. Prominent Democrats had declared against the Kansas-Nebraska law, and some of them,

[1] Sept. 11, 1854.

[2] *Free West*, June 29, Aug. 10, 31, *et seq.*, 1854. Also *Illinois State Register*, Aug. 27, 1854. Clay spoke in Springfield, July 10. *Illinois Journal*, July 11, 1854. Chase spoke to a small crowd in the Court House, Oct. 18. *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 19, 1854. Lincoln did not attend either of these radical meetings.

The Democratic organ hated Codding virulently: 'A fellow by the name of Codding, who has been hired by abolitionism to preach treason thro' Illinois, is on the stump: . . . This is the same hireling who attempted to raise an audience here some months ago, but failed. We learn that he has the promise of the senatorship, if fusion . . . prevails in the coming election.'

If the speckled progeny succeed, 'what a figure must Lincoln and others . . . cut, in the deference of their claims to this itinerant spouter of treason.' *Ib.*, Sept. 29, 1854.

And Giddings, 'this open mouthed abolition disunionist.' *Ib.*, Sept. 7, 1854.

notably John M. Palmer of Macoupin County, championed prohibition as well.[1]

Early in August the anti-Nebraska forces in Illinois and throughout the country were cheered and strengthened by news of the election in Iowa. That hitherto stanchly Democratic State elected a Whig Governor who had spoken in his campaign almost exclusively against the Kansas-Nebraska Act, though at the same time assailing polygamy quite as much as slavery extension. It made little difference to the Democratic opposition in other States that in Iowa, as elsewhere in the North, the other forces described in this chapter had been at work — especially the President's veto of the River and Harbor bill which prevented the removal of snags from the Mississippi and the making of much needed improvements at Dubuque. 'Iowa has condemned in thunder tones the Nebraska swindle,' said the *Illinois Journal*.[2]

Lincoln and Palmer were personal friends, and Lincoln now wrote to him a letter in which moral appeal, personal regard, and political astuteness are well-nigh perfectly blended. 'You know how anxious I am that this Nebraska measure shall be rebuked and condemned everywhere,' began Lincoln. Palmer had always been a Democrat, '*honestly*, and *sincerely;*' and Lincoln realized, he said, how 'painful' it must be to Palmer, to be required by his party to support a measure 'which in his conscience he believes to be wrong.' Won't Palmer make some speeches against it — but 'don't do it, if you think it will injure you.' Of course Palmer must vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress if he has promised to do so, but, in that case, say

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 28, 1854.

'The great *bones of contention* are the Nebraska bill and the passage of a Prohibitory Liquor Law, by our State Legislature.' *Canton Weekly Register*, Oct. 11, 1854.

[2] Aug. 16, 1854. But later the *Illinois Journal* admitted that the veto of the River and Harbor bill was one cause for the election result in Iowa. *Illinois Journal*, Aug. 19, 1854, quoting the *Burlington Telegraph;* and *ib.*, Aug. 28, 1854, quoting the *Lee County* (Ia.) *Plain Dealer*.

An editorial in the *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 4, 1854, said that 'DOWN WITH THE WEST' was a policy of the Administration. 'For some thirty years boats have been employed to remove obstructions in the Mississippi. . . . This great administration have discovered, however, that this keeping open the Mississippi is entirely unconstitutional. . . . The administration knows no west — Their sympathies are for the South. They consider it entirely constitutional to improve harbors in North Carolina.'

This editorial almost certainly was written by Lincoln.

nothing about it lest it influence others. Palmer himself would have been nominated for that place, had he remained regular; and if he had been the Democratic Congressional candidate, Lincoln would 'have made no speeches, written no letters, and you would have been elected by at least a thousand majority' — although, of course, Lincoln admitted that he himself would have voted for the Whig candidate.[1]

Palmer had become a candidate for the State Senate.[2] Lincoln fervently wished that the anti-Nebraska forces would elect a majority of that body who would also be personally attached to Lincoln himself — a natural and worthy desire of a good politician.

In all his speeches, Lincoln took pains to let the people know that he was not an Abolitionist.[3] This was in accord with the overwhelming sentiment of Central Illinois at that time. Nor does it appear that Lincoln made mention of any of the collateral issues of the campaign, such as prohibition, Know-Nothingism, polygamy, or even internal improvements. He kept to the single question of the extension of slavery. On that subject no man in Illinois or the whole country was better prepared than Lincoln.

Toward the end of September, Douglas spoke at Bloomington. Lincoln, too, was there. When Douglas closed, the crowd called for Lincoln. He refused to speak then, but at night answered Douglas before an 'immense' audience in the Court House.[4] In the condition of public feeling a circumstance at Bloomington had as much effect as did stump oratory. Lincoln called on Douglas. A decanter of 'red liquor,' a pitcher of water, and glasses, furnished by the Senator's host, stood on the sideboard, and, as the usual act of politeness of former days, Douglas invited callers to have a drink if they wished.

'Mr. Lincoln, won't you take something,' Douglas is reported to have said when Lincoln rose to go.

[1] Lincoln to Palmer, Sept. 7, 1854. *Works*, II, 187–9.

[2] Palmer was very popular personally — one of the 'most honest, talented, and reliable legislators' and could not be beaten. *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, Oct. 7, 1854.

[3] 'Mr. Lincoln, in his abolition harangues through the country, takes especial pains to disclaim the name of abolitionist.' *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 14, 1854.

[4] *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 29, 1854.

'No, I think not,' said Lincoln.

'Why! are you a member of the Temperance Society?' asked Douglas.

'No! I am not a member of any Temperance Society,' Lincoln answered, 'but I am temperate *in this*, that I don't drink anything.' [1]

Stories of this kind, showing the habits of the two men, were not without influence in their present and succeeding contests, and this fact must be borne in mind throughout this narrative.

At last Douglas reached Springfield. Much of the old enthusiasm for him had been restored and the Democratic spirit was reviving. Kraft's brass band played stirring airs when Douglas's train arrived and Hopkins artillery company, 'in full uniform,' fired salutes as the champion of popular sovereignty made his way to the hotel.[2]

On October 3, 1854, the State Fair opened. For weeks it had been advertised that Douglas would speak on that day. People poured into Springfield by the thousands.[3] Prize cattle, hogs and horses, exhibitions of corn and other farm products, displays of bread, jellies, jams and similar output of housewifely skill, specimens of improved agricultural implements, and all of the features of the annual show,[4] were forgotten for the moment in the excitement over the coming speech of the 'Little Giant.' From all over Illinois political leaders thronged to the capital.

But it rained, and Douglas spoke in the Hall of the House of Representatives instead of in the grove near the city, where seats for five thousand had been prepared. Less than half that number could be 'wedged in at one time,' and hundreds were turned away. He was 'greeted with loud cheers,' gleefully reported the Democratic organ, and made an 'unanswerable' speech. He closed with a particularly savage attack on the Know-Nothings.

[1] Statement of Jas. T. Ewing. MS. in the Jesse Fell Memorial.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 4, 1854. Douglas came on the Chicago & Alton road. The *Illinois Journal* (Oct. 3, 1854) declared that nobody was at the station to meet him.

[3] 'An unprecedented concourse of people had gathered from all parts of the State.' Herndon, II, 367.

[4] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 4, 1854, describing exhibits at the Fair.

The editor of the State Democratic organ could neither repress nor express his delight — as for a second time he editorially exclaimed! It was simply 'impossible to do justice' to Douglas's speech; everybody said that it was 'unanswerable,' and Lanphier had not realized at first how 'unanswerable' it was.[1]

Next day Lincoln answered it. As has been seen, he was fully prepared. For weeks he had been making the same speech to which we are now to listen, testing the arguments on many an audience, developing, reducing, simplifying, as is the way of seasoned campaigners.[2] Moreover his ambition was once more at white heat. He was again a candidate for the Legislature; but, if all went well at the election next month, he had resolved to try for the national Senate, an effort which his wife insisted he should make.[3] Six years later he wrote that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had 'aroused' him; but Herndon testifies that Lincoln now saw and grasped his opportunity for political resuscitation.[4] Both assertions were accurate.

On the afternoon of October 4, 1854, the Hall of Representatives was again crowded. The audience was practically the same that had heard Douglas. In addition to the announcement made at the Douglas meeting, handbills had been scattered over Springfield and the Fair Grounds the following morning, advising everybody that Lincoln would answer Douglas at two o'clock that afternoon.[5]

It was a sultry day and the air in the Hall was heavy when, at the appointed hour, the tall, thin, awkward lawyer mounted the platform. He was in his shirt sleeves, without collar or stock, and his short, ill-fitting trousers added to the homeliness of his appearance. Lincoln had asked Douglas to be present

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 4, 5, 1854.

[2] He had spoken once before in Springfield in answer to his old employer, John Calhoun; but the papers had said nothing about it. Nicolay and Hay, I, 374–5.

[3] Herndon, II, 374–5.

[4] 'Lincoln saw his opportunity and Douglas' downfall.' Herndon to Weik, Oct. 28, 1885. Weik MSS.

'The repeal of the Missouri Compromise acts roused Lincoln — waked him up to his new opportunities and he seized them.' Same to same, Feb. 11, 1887. Weik MSS.

'This repeal was his opportunity and he seized it and rode to glory on the popular wave.' *Ib.*

[5] *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 5, 1854.

and make reply if he wished to do so, and the well-clad, well-groomed Senator was there.

Lincoln had written his speech carefully, and next day the *Illinois Journal* published a long abstract of it, undoubtedly prepared by the speaker.[1] But he did not have his entire manuscript published until after he had delivered his speech at Peoria, twelve days later, when for the third time he answered Douglas. So this speech of Lincoln's appears in his *Works* as the 'Peoria Speech,' and is so known.

He first cracked some jokes 'the character of which will be understood by all who know him, by simply saying they were *Lincolnisms*,' reported the hostile *State Register*.[2] Then he made his prepared speech. He began haltingly, in his thin, rasping voice, and Kentucky accent. But soon his hesitation disappeared, he became earnest, at times passionate. His hair was disordered, and as he proceeded, sweat poured down his face. Time and again the crowd burst into applause and when he closed the Hall rang with cheers.[3]

Lincoln was now in his forty-sixth year and this speech was wholly unlike any before made by him. Indeed, if it and his public utterances thereafter were placed side by side with his previous speeches, and the authorship of them all were unknown, it would appear impossible that they had been written by the same man. Because of this and because the Springfield address contained all the ideas, or the germs of them, that Lincoln expressed thereafter and up to the time he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation, a comprehensive résumé of what he said must now be given.

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 5, 1854. This synopsis is not only in Lincoln's unmistakable style, but it is so closely knit, logical, consecutive, and accurate, that even the most expert press reporter in Springfield could not possibly have written it at the meeting or afterwards.

[2] Oct. 6, 1854. Italics *Register's*.

[3] *Abraham Lincoln in 1854:* an Address by Horace White before Illinois State Historical Society, Jan. 30, 1908, 10.

Horace White, then twenty years of age, was present at the Springfield meeting and later at Peoria, as a reporter for the *Chicago Journal*. From this time forward he had close relations with Lincoln, whom he found to be 'an exceedingly shrewd politician.' We owe to White much trustworthy information about Lincoln in politics during the period under review. White became Secretary of the Republican State Central Committee in 1856. He later was the editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. *Ib.*, 19.

While practically all facts and arguments adduced in this speech had been used many times by others and had often appeared in the anti-Nebraska press, Lincoln's method of statement was new and distinctive. Moreover, there is a breadth, sympathy, and tolerance in Lincoln's speech not to be found in any other pronouncement of the times. His fairness and honesty are well-nigh startling, considering the deep feeling then existing, and considering, too, that he was making a campaign stump speech.

In the main Lincoln followed the Appeal, as did all other opponents of the Kansas-Nebraska Act; but he rejected the theory that it was the result of a plot of the Slave Power. Also his speech is clear of vituperation, unstained by abuse — a fact in striking contrast to most other political utterances of the day. Then, too, Lincoln expressed the moral phase of the subject in plainer if more moderate terms than any one else had done. Finally, we have in this speech passages of that exalted yet restrained eloquence which establishes Lincoln's fame as an orator of the first rank. We find in it, also, promise of that breadth of mind and generosity of spirit which is to be fully realized in the Second Inaugural.

He would speak on the repeal of the Missouri Compromise he began, and 'the propriety of its restoration.' In doing so he would not question the patriotism or motives of 'any man or class of men,' but confine himself to the 'naked merits of the question.' Since the subject was 'part and parcel' of the slavery question, Lincoln wished to make clear and broad 'the distinction between the existing institution and the extension of it.'

The policy of prohibiting slavery in new territory originated with Jefferson, 'who was, is, and perhaps will continue to be, the most distinguished politician of our history,' Lincoln declared. That policy was embodied in the Ordinance of 1787, adopted before the Government under the Constitution was established. Thus the mighty Northwest Territory[1] was 'now what Jefferson foresaw and intended — the happy home of teeming millions of free, white, prosperous people, and no slave among them.'

[1] The States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

For more than sixty years Jefferson's policy had worked well, averred Lincoln: 'But now new light breaks upon us.' Congress says that that policy violated 'the sacred right of self-government.' Men who have been born and have always lived under Jefferson's restriction against slavery, now fear 'absolute suffocation if they are restricted in the "sacred right" of taking slaves to Nebraska.' Such men never before thought of 'that perfect liberty they sigh for — the liberty of making slaves of other people.'

The first slavery agitation in our history was caused by the attempt to admit Missouri as a slave State and the resistance by the North, Lincoln narrated. The Union was in peril and 'the ablest public men of the day' arranged a Compromise. Under it Missouri came in as a slave State, but slavery was excluded forever in all other territory acquired from France north of 36° 30′. Then when Texas was annexed that line was extended westward across her territory.[1]

Only five years ago, in 1849, Douglas had said that all men and parties approved the Missouri Compromise; and that 'all the evidences of public opinion at that day seemed to indicate that this Compromise had been canonized in the hearts of the American people, as a sacred thing which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb.' [2]

While I was in the House, said Lincoln, 'the Wilmot proviso, or the principle of it, was constantly coming up in some shape or other, and I think I may venture to say I voted for it at least forty times during the short time I was there.' [3]

When Douglas introduced a bill to extend the Missouri Compromise line across that domain to the Pacific, 'the proviso men

[1] This was one of the only two errors of fact made by Lincoln in a three-hour speech containing a multitude of historical statements.

[2] Quoted by Lincoln, *Works*, II, 199.

From the time of the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, the *Illinois Journal* had often printed this extract from Douglas's speech in 1849 and had attacked him in severe editorials for his 'change' of position. For example, see *Illinois Journal*, May 23, 29, Sept. 2, Aug. 7, 1854. One or two of these editorials were, probably, written by Lincoln.

[3] The Wilmot proviso came to a vote twice, and 'in principle' three times during Lincoln's term in the House. Lincoln's assertion was not a misstatement or intentional inaccuracy, but merely a manner of speech. The expression 'forty times' was a familiar phrase, equivalent to the word 'many' — 'I did, said, voted, etc., forty times' was a common method of stating frequency.

in the House, including myself, voted it down, because, by implication, it gave up the southern part to slavery, while we were bent on having it all free.'

California had been kept out of the Union in 1849 because of her anti-slavery constitution. But, Lincoln added with amazing fairness, 'under all the circumstances, perhaps, this was not wrong,' since many other things then required adjustment — a new Fugitive Slave Law for which the South 'clamored,' abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia for which the North 'clamored,' slavery in Utah and New Mexico, the Texan boundary which was also a slavery question.

'These points . . . were held up, perhaps wisely, to make them help adjust one another. The Union . . . was thought to be in danger, and devotion to the Union rightfully inclined men to yield somewhat in points, where nothing else could have so inclined them.' In this wise came the Compromise of 1850, continued Lincoln. Two years later, 'each of the great political parties' declared it to be a 'finality,' as the Legislature of Illinois had already done.

So stood matters when migration to Nebraska began, Lincoln related. The Missouri Compromise, first made for the restriction of slavery, has since been maintained, expressly for Nebraska. A year ago [1853] a Nebraska bill had passed the House and failed in the Senate 'only for want of time. This bill contained no repeal of the Missouri Compromise,' and, when assailed because it did not, 'Judge Douglas defended it in its existing form.' Then on January 4, 1854, he 'introduces a new bill . . . with a report, in which last he expressly recommends that the Missouri Compromise shall neither be affirmed nor repealed.' Next, the territory is divided into two parts and, finally, Douglas amends the bill so 'as to declare the Missouri Compromise inoperative and void; and, substantially, that the people who go and settle there may establish slavery, or exclude it, as they may see fit.' Thus it becomes a law.[1]

Such, Lincoln said, was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; and it was 'wrong — wrong in its direct effect, letting slavery into Kansas and Nebraska, and wrong in its prospective

[1] *Works*, II, 204.

principle, allowing it to spread to every other part of the wide world where men can be found inclined to take it.' [1]

'This declared indifference, but, as I must think, covert real

[1] This statement, which Lincoln repeated twice in his long speech, was directed to frequent editorials and articles in the Democratic press, that Cuba, Porto Rico, Northern Mexico, and the Sandwich Islands, must be annexed or acquired in some way short of conquest.

The Abolition and Free-Soil press insisted, and two or three radical pro-slavery Southern journals admitted, that all this territory would be made slave States. It was charged that, after making this accession of territory adapted to slavery, the South planned to withdraw from the Union.

Immediately after the Kansas-Nebraska Act became a law, the Washington correspondent of the *New York Express* sent his paper a long story to this effect, which the *Illinois Journal*, June 21, 1854, printed conspicuously under the caption 'A SCHEME TO DISSOLVE THE UNION.'

An unnamed Senator was reported to have told the correspondent that 'the ultra-Southern party is determined to obtain possession of Cuba, and, after that, to separate from the Northern States. . . . Their plan is to seize upon Cuba, and enough of Mexico to connect California by the Southern route with their new Republic. . . . The Secessionists are not without hope that the Southern sections of Illinois and Indiana may prove friendly to their scheme. . . . Even moderate, calm, and intelligent Southern men arouse themselves in favor of separation. . . . They say they are tired of these eternal bickerings and quarrels, and wish to live hereafter in peace and quiet. . . . They have come to the conclusion that there is a natural antagonism between the North and South, and that they at least would be better off if released from the Union.'

Two days later, June 12, 1854, Lincoln's organ declared that Douglas had said in a recent speech in New York, that the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Act must be applied '*in all times to come . . . whether it be Nebraska, Kansas, Oregon, Mexico, Cuba, or the Sandwich Islands.*' Italics the *Journal's*.

On this speech of Douglas, the *Illinois Journal* based a strong editorial: 'The slave power have now the control of this government. They are seeking to obtain Cuba for the purpose of extending slave power. . . . They have now already received information that their project of purchasing more territory from Mexico to enlarge slave area, is likely to be successful;' yet the purchase money 'belongs to the free north as well as to the slave propagandists south,' etc. *Illinois Journal*, June 12, 1854.

Soon another editorial, 'WHAT IS TO BE DONE,' appeared: 'This Nebraska question connects with other questions. We cannot trust tomorrow, the traitors of today. We have Nebraska in 1854 — we may have Cuba, or Chihuahua in '56. . . . Every office that is connected with the great council of the nation must be filled by men who are primarily *right*, on the NEBRASKA QUESTION.' *Illinois Journal*, June 17, 1854.

Similar editorials and articles were published by the anti-slavery press all over the country; and every paper, regardless of political affiliation, had pieces on Cuba, Mexico, the Sandwich Islands, etc. Except for the slavery question, it would appear that the country generally, at this period of expansion, was favorable to getting as much new territory as it could.

Sumner thought that the Administration intended to seize Cuba while France and England were at war with Russia — the Crimean War. Sumner to Earl of Carlisle, Oct. 26, 1854. Pierce, III, 407.

The *Illinois Journal*, Nov. 9, 1854, printed an editorial, quoting the *Charleston Mercury* as saying that 'slavery must spread in area and power. . . . If the north colonizes for abolition, the south must colonize for slavery,' etc.

'Cuba is bound to belong to the United States,' not through war or filibuster, but by purchase. *Washington Sentinel*, June 27, 1854; *Cairo City* (Ill.) *Times*, Sept. 27, 1854.

zeal, for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate,' exclaimed Lincoln. 'I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions with plausibility to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity; and especially because it forces so many good men among ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty, criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.' [1]

Thus, on October 4, 1854, did Lincoln, for the first time in his life, publicly and in forthright words denounce slavery,[2] and assert that it was incompatible with American institutions. Yet he did not propose to abolish it out of hand, but only to restrict it. Indeed, Horace White says that Lincoln never was considered an anti-slavery man before the Emancipation Proclamation; [3] and presently we shall see him leave Springfield to avoid attending a meeting of 'the friends of freedom.'

Slave-holders were not to be blamed, said Lincoln. 'I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation.' They would not introduce slavery if it did not already exist; and if we had it, 'we should not instantly give it up.' Perhaps there were individual exceptions on both sides — every one knew that some Southern men freed their slaves, 'go North and become tip-top Abolitionists, while some Northern ones go South and become most cruel slave masters.' [4] Lincoln could 'understand and appreciate' what the Southern people said about the difficulty of getting rid of slavery.

'I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia, to their own native land.' [5]

[1] *Works*, II, 205. [2] *Address:* White, 31–2. [3] *Ib.*, 44. [4] *Works*, II, 205–6.

[5] It must be kept in mind that Lincoln was an ardent supporter of the Colonization Society. As late as 1854, he and Browning were advertised to speak in Springfield on colonization. *Illinois Journal*, Jan. 12, 1854. Sickness in his family kept Lincoln at home and Browning spoke alone. *Ib.*, Jan. 14, 1854.

Lincoln thought that there was 'high hope' that this might be done 'in the long run,' but not suddenly. 'If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough to carry them there in many times ten days.'

What, then, was to be done with the slaves? asked Lincoln. Would it better their condition to free them and 'keep them among us as underlings?' He thought that he would not 'hold one in slavery at any rate, yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon.'

So 'what next?' Lincoln inquired; and in answer to his own question, he gave an accurate statement of general sentiment in the North, as well as his own at that time.[1] 'What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this, and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of whites will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment is not the sole question, if indeed it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded cannot be safely disregarded.'

He favored 'gradual emancipation,' he said, yet not so urgently that he would 'undertake to judge our brethren of the South' for their tardiness in adopting it.[2] Thus Lincoln anticipated the lofty tolerance of the Second Inaugural.

He acknowledged the constitutional right of the South, 'not grudgingly, but fully and fairly,' he avowed; and, he continued, 'I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives which should not in its stringency be more likely to carry a free man into slavery than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one'[3] — in short the most effective Fugitive Slave Law that was practicable.

'But all this . . . furnishes no more excuse for permitting slavery to go into our own free territory than it would for reviving the African slave-trade by law.' The repeal of the law excluding slavery from Nebraska was no better than would be the repeal of 'the law which forbids the bringing of slaves from Africa.'

[1] *Works*, II, 206–7. [2] *Ib.*, II, 207. [3] *Ib.*, 207–8.

Lincoln insisted that the organization of the Nebraska country did not require the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Iowa and Minnesota had been given Territorial Governments without that repeal, although the Missouri restriction applied to them as much as to Kansas and Nebraska. Again he cited the Nebraska bill of 1853 — 'why no necessity then for repeal?' he asked.

If those who arranged the Missouri Compromise intended that it should be applied to other territory than the French acquisition, 'why did they not say so?' They easily could have done it, but they did not, he said. 'Both the law itself, and the history of the times, are a blank as to any principle of extension; and by neither the known rules of construing statutes and contracts, nor by common sense, can such principle be inferred.' [1]

Missouri came in with slavery, although north of the Compromise line; therefore if any principle of extension was involved, the South had 'the right to have another [slave state] given them north of it occasionally, now and then, in the indefinite westward extension of the line.' How absurd!

When voting to exclude slavery from the whole Mexican acquisition, 'little did we think we were thereby voting to let it into Nebraska . . . little did we think we were voting to destroy the old line, then of near thirty years' standing.'

To say so was as foolish as to contend that 'because we have so far forborne to acquire Cuba, we have thereby, in principle, repudiated our former acquisitions and determined to throw them out of the Union. No less absurd than it would be to say that because I may have refused to build an addition to my house, I thereby have decided to destroy the existing house! And if I catch you setting fire to my house, you will turn upon me and say I instructed you to do it!'

The Utah and New Mexico Acts applied to those territories exclusively, and to 'no other place whatever,' insisted Lincoln. 'It had no more direct reference to Nebraska than it had to the territories of the moon.' Moreover the Utah-New Mexico provision was part of a bargain — 'if you wish the thing again, pay

[1] *Works*, II, 209–10.

again.' The Compromise of 1850 was a 'system of equivalents; . . . ask us not to repeat, for nothing,' what was paid for in the first instance.

If Congress meant to establish the principle of popular sovereignty, why did they not apply it to the District of Columbia? He personally knew, testified Lincoln, that that very thing was talked of often by members of Congress and by citizens of Washington, while he was in the House; 'and I heard no one express a doubt that a system of gradual emancipation, with compensation to owners, would meet the approbation of a large majority of the white people of the District. But without the action of Congress they could say nothing; and Congress said "No."' [1]

Douglas had belabored those who endorsed the Compromise of 1850 and yet opposed now the Kansas-Nebraska Act which, according to Douglas, merely carried out the 'principle' of that historic adjustment. So Lincoln carefully explained what he meant, or rather what he did not mean by his sanction in 1852, of the Great Compromise.

'I meant not to ask a repeal or modification of the fugitive-slave law.

'I meant not to ask for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

'I meant not to resist the admission of Utah and New Mexico, even should they ask to come in as slave States.

'I meant nothing about additional Territories, because . . . we then had no Territory whose character as to slavery was not already settled.

'As to Nebraska, I regarded its character . . . as unalterably fixed as that of my own home in Illinois.

'As to new acquisitions, I said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." When we make new acquisitions, we will, as heretofore, try to manage them somehow.'

To say that the changes in the Kansas-Nebraska bill did not alter it substantially was like saying that there was no difference between white and black. Douglas 'admits' that he changed the bill to get the support of other Senators; that

[1] *Works*, II, 215.

proved, argued Lincoln, that those Senators 'thought the change a substantial one,' and everybody believed that on that change 'this whole agitation has arisen.'

Was that repeal right in itself? No! answered Lincoln. He restated the terms of the Missouri Compromise, and said that, heretofore, slave and free states had come in under that arrangement; but that now, the South having used her part of the territory below the Missouri line, wanted to destroy that boundary. How 'manifestly unjust! . . . It is as if two starving men had divided their only loaf; the one had hastily swallowed his half, and then grabbed the other's half just as he was putting it to his mouth.'

With astounding candor, Lincoln declared that it was not important whether or not slavery would go into Kansas — indeed, he considered it 'rather an inferior matter.' But Douglas's argument that slavery could not exist in those Territories, was 'a palliation, a lullaby.' [1] Lincoln had some hope that it would not; 'but let us not be too confident,' he warned his hearers.[2]

Look at Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri! — all slave States and 'all north of the Missouri Compromise line.' The Census of 1850 showed that 'more than one fourth of all the slaves in the nation' were in those States. That proved that climate would not keep slavery out of Kansas and Nebraska. Neither would the soil of those Territories, for it was the same as that of western Missouri, and there were more slaves there than in any other part of that State. When 'rather recently,' said Lincoln, the Northwestern boundary of Missouri was extended, 'slavery followed on quite up to the new line.' Would it not go into Kansas and Nebraska 'when the restriction is removed?'

Since neither soil nor climate would prevent it, would 'the

[1] *Works*, II, 219.

[2] During the campaign, the Democratic press and speakers insisted, as they had done since before the Nebraska bill was introduced in January, 1854, that slavery could not exist in that country. The Weekly *National Intelligencer*, with which Lincoln usually agreed, took the same position, and printed many editorials and articles to that effect from other papers. See, for instance, the issue of Nov. 4, 1854, containing a typical editorial from the *Detroit Free Press*. And see *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 21, 1854; *Indiana State Sentinel*, Aug. 9, 1854, etc.

disposition of the people prevent it? Those nearest the scene are all in favor of the extension,' while 'the Yankees who are opposed to it' are too far away. Theoretically, slaves would be free when taken to the Territories, because there was no law there on the subject; but practically, the negroes would be still kept in slavery because nobody would tell them of their rights. Thus when the time came to vote on the question, slavery would already be established, and the majority would favor the institution because it was there and hard to get rid of.

But, argued Lincoln, keep slavery out 'until a vote is taken' by a free population and slavery would be rejected. 'To get slaves into the Territory simultaneously with the whites in the incipient stages of settlement is the precise stake played for and won in this Nebraska measure.' [1]

To say that the number of slaves was not increased by taking them into the Territories, was 'another lullaby argument.' [2] The increase of slave population was 'unaccountable, except by supposing that some of them, too, have been coming from Africa,' and 'the African slave-trade is not yet effectually suppressed.' Extension of slave territory created a demand for slaves and tended 'to the perpetuation of the institution.' [3]

To say that 'equal justice to the South' required the extension of slavery to the new Territories, was to say that 'inasmuch as you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore I must not object to your taking your slave.' That argument was 'perfectly logical, if there is no difference between hogs and negroes.' But did the Southern people, themselves, think that — or act it? Most of them did not. 'The great majority, South as well as North, have human sympathies, of which they can no more divest themselves than they can of their sensibility to physical pain.' So the Southern people acknowledged that 'there is humanity in the negro.' See how slave-holders treat the slave-dealer. They avoid him — 'in-

[1] *Works*, II, 221–2.

[2] Lincoln himself had made this very point ten years earlier. See Chap. VII, Vol. I, of this Work.

[3] *Works*, II, 222–3.

stinctively shrinking from the snaky contact.' They do not so treat the dealer in corn, cotton, or tobacco. Why?

There were 433,643 'free blacks' in the country worth, at five hundred dollars a head, over two hundred millions of dollars. 'How comes this vast amount of property to be running about without owners,' whimsically inquired Lincoln? 'We do not see free horses or free cattle running at large. How is this?' [1]

What of the 'great argument' in support of the Kansas-Nebraska bill — 'the sacred right of self-government?' Even Senators had not met Douglas 'fairly on that argument.' So, exclaimed Lincoln, since

> '"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"

. . . I rush in — I take that bull by the horns.' He was for local self-government, he said; that doctrine 'is right — absolutely and eternally right' — right as to individuals, right as to communities. 'Here, or at Washington, I would not trouble myself with the oyster laws of Virginia, or the cranberry laws of Indiana.'

But that principle had no just application 'as here attempted,' unless a negro is not a man. If he is a man, ought he not to govern himself? 'My ancient faith teaches me that "all men are created equal,"' and that slavery is against moral right.

In answer to Douglas's 'bitter irony and sarcasm,' that his opponents conceded that white people in the Territories were 'good enough to govern themselves, but they are not good enough to govern a few miserable negroes!' Lincoln said that those white people were as good, perhaps, as the average of people elsewhere. But that was not the point.

'What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet-anchor of American republicanism. . . . Allow all the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only, is self-government.' This was, perhaps, the first thoroughly radical statement Lincoln ever made. Yet

[1] *Works*, II, 223–5.

he instantly qualified it. He was not for 'political and social equality between the whites and blacks.' He was only 'combating what is set up as moral argument . . . for the extension of a bad thing.' Where slavery already existed, 'we must of necessity manage as best we can.'

Do we not own the Nebraska country? 'If we surrender the control of it, do we not surrender the right of self-government? It is part of ourselves. If you say we shall not control it, because it is only part, the same is true of every other part; and when all the parts are gone, what has become of the whole? What is then left of us? What use for the General Government, when there is nothing left for it to govern?'

No consolidationist had said anything more extreme for centralized power.

To say that the people of the Territories should settle the slavery question for themselves 'because they are more particularly interested' in it, was to say that each individual should decide for himself 'whether he will have slaves. What better moral right have thirty-one citizens of Nebraska to say that the thirty-second shall not hold slaves than the people of the thirty-one States have to say that slavery shall not go into the thirty-second State at all?

'If it is a sacred right for the people of Nebraska to take and hold slaves there, it is equally their sacred right to buy them where they can buy them cheapest; and that, undoubtedly, will be on the coast of Africa, provided you will consent not to hang them for going there to buy them.'

The argument that 'taking slaves from the States to Nebraska does not make slaves of freemen,' meant nothing, Lincoln said; 'the African slave-trader can say just as much. He does not catch free negroes and bring them here. He finds them already slaves in the hands of their black captors, and he honestly buys them at the rate of a red cotton handkerchief a head. This is very cheap, and it is a great abridgment of the sacred right of self-government to hang men for engaging in this profitable trade,' Lincoln sarcastically observed.

By Douglas's doctrine of self-government 'the first few may get slavery in, and the subsequent many cannot easily get it

out.' The people of the slave States could not now get rid of the institution because of 'the action of a very few in the beginning.' Was that self-government? [1]

Whether slavery should go to the Territories was not the 'exclusive concern' of those who lived there — 'the whole nation was interested' in the Territories; 'we want them for homes of free white people.' That could not be where slavery was. Look at the South! it was a region for 'poor white people to remove from, not to remove to. New free States are the places for poor people to go to, and better their condition. For this use the nation needs these Territories.'

Slave States were bad for the remainder of the country, for 'we are under legal obligations to catch and return their runaway slaves to them: a sort of dirty, disagreeable job, which . . . the slave-holders will not perform for one another.'

And consider the advantage of the slave States over the free States in representation; 'five slaves are counted as being equal to three whites.' Was that fair? Like all anti-slavery politicians, Lincoln dwelt at length and with emphasis upon the injustice to the North of slave enumeration. 'The South Carolinian . . . is more than the double of any one of us in this crowd.' In varying degrees this inequality was true of all free and slave States. Still, 'manifestly unfair' as this inequality was, 'it is in the Constitution, and I do not for that cause, or any other cause, propose to destroy, or alter, or disregard the Constitution. I stand to it, fairly, fully, and firmly.'

But, Lincoln did object to leaving to other people to decide 'whether new partners are to be bred up and brought into the firm, on the same degrading terms against me.' No other man had 'a sacred right' to decide for him whether he was to be 'a whole man, or only the half of one, in comparison with others.' If anybody had such a right, what became of the 'sacred right' of the man who was thus reduced to the fraction of a man?

The extension of slavery endangers American liberty and institutions more than all other causes: how recreant to themselves if the people submit 'the fate of their country, to a mere handful of men bent only on self-interest. . . . Shall the strong

[1] *Works*, II, 232.

grip of the nation be loosened upon him [the great Behemoth of danger], to intrust him to the hands of such feeble keepers?

'I have done with this mighty argument of self-government. Go, sacred thing! Go in peace.'

The Kansas-Nebraska was not a 'Union-saving measure,' as Douglas insisted. If it were, Lincoln declared he would support it. 'Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any great evil to avoid a greater one.'

Douglas must have known that his bill would be 'looked upon as a measure for the extension of slavery, aggravated by a gross breach of faith.' It was bound to create agitation; for, said Lincoln, 'slavery is founded in the selfishness of man's nature — opposition to it in his love of justice. These principles are at eternal antagonism, and when brought into collision . . . shocks and throes and convulsions must ceaselessly follow.'

Repeal everything else — the Declaration of Independence itself and 'all past history' — and still human nature remained. That could not be repealed, and it cried out that slavery was wrong.[1]

For several weeks the *Illinois Journal* and other anti-slavery papers had been publishing belligerent resolutions adopted by meetings in western Missouri, denouncing the efforts of Emigrant Aid Societies to people Kansas with Abolitionists and asserting that Missouri slave-holders would support by force their brethren in the new Territory.[2] To this beginning of that conflict in Kansas, which we are soon to behold, Lincoln thus made reference:

[1] *Works*, II, 237–8.

[2] 'Apprehensive of interference with our private and domestic concerns [slavery] by certain organized bands who are to be precipitated upon us, we notify all such, that our purpose is firm, to enjoy all our rights, and to meet with the last argument all who shall in any way infringe upon them.' From resolutions adopted at Westport, Mo. *Illinois Journal*, June 20, 1854.

'This association will, whenever called upon by any of the citizens of Kansas Territory, hold itself in readiness to go there, to assist in removing any and all emigrants who go there under the auspices of the Northern Emigration Aid Societies.' From resolutions adopted at Weston, Mo., 'near the border of Kansas,' Aug. 20, 1854. *Ib.*, Sept. 15, 1854.

At first, such gestures were meant to scare away any settlers sent to Kansas by the Emigrant Aid Societies. *Worcester* (Mass.) *Spy*, clipped in *Indiana State Sentinel*, Aug. 7, 1854. But see *New York Herald* in *ib.*, June 21, 1854.

'Kansas is swarming with emigrants, not as predicted, with slaveholders, carrying

'Some Yankees in the East are sending emigrants to Nebraska to exclude slavery from it;' and expect to vote 'some way or other. But the Missourians are awake, too. They are within a stone's-throw of the contested ground,' and talk not of voting but of violence. 'They resolve that slavery already exists in the Territory: that more shall go there; that they, remaining in Missouri, will protect it, and that Abolitionists shall be hung or driven away. Through all this bowie-knives and six-shooters are seen plainly enough, but never a glimpse of the ballot-box.' [1]

So 'each party within having numerous and determined backers without,' the probable result would be 'blows and bloodshed.' That was the natural outcome of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. If Congress had deliberately arranged for it, 'the fight could be no more likely to come off than it is.' And where would it end? 'Will not the first drop of blood so shed be the real knell of the Union?' [2]

Restore the Missouri Compromise, pleaded Lincoln. If that were not done, the spirit of adjustment would be 'discarded' even if slavery should be excluded from the Territories. 'The spirit of mutual concession — . . . which first gave us the Constitution, and which has thrice saved the Union — we shall have strangled and cast from us forever.'

The result would be mutual hatred and defiance between North and South, he prophesied. Already 'a few' in the North defy the Constitution, resist the Fugitive Slave Law, and even menace slavery where it exists; and 'a few in the South claim the constitutional right to take and to hold slaves in the free States — demand the revival of the slave-trade,' and the extradition of fugitive slaves. 'As yet they are but few on either side,' but the destruction of 'the spirit of all compromise' might 'embolden and embitter each of these, and fatally increase the number of both.' With touching eloquence Lincoln implored the South to join the North in this fraternal policy: 'It would be on their part a great act — great in its spirit, and great in its effect.'

their "property" from a profitable to an unprofitable market, but of good stout laboring white men, with gun and axe in hand, their wives and children and their implements of industry, to lay the foundations for a flourishing free State.' *Ib.*, Aug. 11, 1854.

[1] *Works*, II, 239. [2] *Ib.*, 240.

It would be no sacrifice for the South; 'they only surrender to us what they gave us for a consideration long, long ago; *what they have not now asked for, struggled or cared for; what has been thrust upon them, not less to their astonishment than to ours.*' [1]

This vital assertion was in direct contradiction of the charge made by the anti-slavery press and anti-slavery speakers, that the South had planned and procured the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. From the historical point of view, this statement of Lincoln's is, perhaps, the most important in his great speech.

What the authors of the Kansas-Nebraska Act really wanted, insisted Lincoln, was the establishment of 'a principle for future use' — 'with them, Nebraska alone is a small matter.' What was that 'future use' to which that principle was to be applied? It was 'the planting of slavery wherever in the wide world local and unorganized opposition cannot prevent it,' [2] and Lincoln again made reference to the project of acquiring Cuba, Mexico, and other territory.

It was 'silly,' he said, to hesitate to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act, as many Whigs were doing, 'lest they be thrown in company with the Abolitionists. . . .

'Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.

'Stand with the Abolitionist in restoring the Missouri Compromise, and stand against him when he attempts to repeal the fugitive slave law.

'In the latter case you stand with the Southern disunionist. What of that? you are still right.

'In both cases you are right. In both cases you oppose the dangerous extremes. In both you stand on middle ground, and hold the ship level and steady.[3]

'In both you are national, and nothing less than national. This is the good old Whig ground. To desert such ground be-

[1] Italics author's. As late as July 10, 1854, the *Illinois Journal* said: 'We see that there are evidences in the south of dissatisfaction with the repeal of the Missouri compromise. They see no good to result from it.'

The Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 4, 1854, quoted the *Flag of the Union*, published at Jackson, Miss., as violently attacking the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

[2] *Works*, II, 242.

[3] This is one of the few instances where, in his later speeches, Lincoln conspicuously mixed his metaphors.

cause of any company, is to be less than a Whig — less than a man — less than an American.' [1]

The Kansas-Nebraska Act was based on the assumption 'that there can be moral right in the enslaving of one man by another.' To accept that principle was 'a dangerous dalliance for a free people — a sad evidence that, feeling prosperity, we forget right; that liberty, as a principle, we have ceased to revere.'

Lincoln told how slavery came to be recognized in the Constitution. 'Thus the thing is hid away in the Constitution, just as an afflicted man hides away a wen or cancer which he dares not cut out at once, lest he bleed to death, — with the promise, nevertheless, that the cutting may begin at a certain time.' [2] Slavery was now 'transformed into a "sacred right." . . . Steadily as man's march to the grave, we have been giving up the old for the new faith.[3] . . . These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon; and whoever holds to the one must despise the other.' Even a Senator of the United States had called the Declaration of Independence 'a self-evident lie.' What would 'Marion's men, Southerners though they were,' have done to such a man? The captors of André would have hanged him sooner than the British spy was hanged. The very doorkeeper of Independence Hall 'would have throttled the man and thrust him into the street. . . .

'The spirit of seventy-six and the spirit of Nebraska are utter antagonisms; and the former is being rapidly displaced by the latter.'

Thus Lincoln rose to a climax of pure and noble eloquence. 'Is there no danger to liberty itself in discarding the earliest practice and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greedy chase to make profit of the negro, let us beware lest we "cancel and tear in pieces" even the white man's charter of freedom.

'Our republican robe is soiled and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white in the spirit, if not the blood, of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of "moral right" back . . . to the position our fathers gave it, and there let it rest in peace. Let us readopt the

[1] *Works*, II, 243. [2] *Ib.*, 244–5. [3] *Ib.*, 246.

Declaration of Independence, and with it the practices and policy which harmonize with it.

'Let North and South — let all Americans — let all lovers of liberty everywhere join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union, but we shall have so saved it as to make and to keep it forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it that the succeeding millions of free, happy people, the world over, shall rise up and call us blessed to the latest generations.' [1]

When Lincoln closed — and indeed often during the delivery of his speech, Herndon testifies — 'loud and continuous huzzas' rose from the enthusiastic audience, and 'women waved their white handkerchiefs.' The junior partner did not think the praise of Lincoln's speech in the *Journal* next day [2] was warm enough; so Herndon took the editorial pen in his own hand, and produced 'with youthful enthusiasm,' a laudation of Lincoln's speech which has gone into history.

It was 'the profoundest' of Lincoln's 'whole life. . . . His feelings . . . came near stifling utterance. He quivered with emotion. The whole house was as still as death,' except when it approved the 'glorious triumph of truth by loud and continued huzzas. . . . The Nebraska bill was shivered, like a tree . . . by the hot bolts of truth. . . . He took the heart captive and broke like a sun over the understanding.' The friends of Douglas felt that he was 'crushed' by Lincoln's argument and logic.[3]

For a man thus 'crushed,' Douglas displayed surprising vitality; for he instantly took the platform and spoke for an hour and a half in reply. The brief report of his speech given in the Democratic organ [4] is so partisan and ecstatic, that we are left to Lincoln's answer at Peoria twelve days later for a summary of what Douglas said:

The Kansas-Nebraska Act would not extend slavery and was

[1] *Works*, II, 248. [2] Oct. 5, 1854.

[3] Herndon, II, 367–9. 'The editorial . . . was my own.' Herndon's statement. Yet Lincoln's wonderful speech attracted little attention in other papers, even in Illinois. In telling of the Springfield debate during 'Fair Week' the *Alton Weekly Courier*, Oct. 12, 1854, merely makes mention that Lincoln was one of the speakers along with Breese, Trumbull, and Douglas.

[4] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 6, 1854.

not designed to extend it; Congressional intervention never had prevented slavery anywhere, whereas local self-government had done so in every free State; that principle began when man was given the choice between good and evil and held responsible for the exercise of that choice; suppression of the African slave trade was provided for in the Constitution which, however, did not exclude slavery from the Territories; as to representation, negroes were fully enumerated in the free States, but only partially in the slave States; the measures of the Great Compromise had no dependence upon one another; the Utah and New Mexico laws authorized slavery before as well as after Statehood, if the people wanted it; the act of 1853 for the organization of Washington Territory, in effect, repealed the Ordinance of 1787; the American Government had been made by white people for white people and not for negroes.[1]

The Democratic editor was even more jubilant over Douglas's rejoinder than Herndon was over Lincoln's reply: 'Mr. Lincoln had been selected as the Goliah of the anti-Nebraska black republican fusionists,' said the *State Register*. But Douglas demolished him; 'the thunders of the applauding multitude shook the state house from turret top to foundation stone,' and the people kept on cheering as they left the hall.[2]

Herndon again wrote an editorial on Douglas's close: his eloquence was 'false and brusque. He is haughty and imperative. . . . a very tyrant. . . . Douglas, it must be confessed, has power. . . . He is the grand master of human passion and rules the crowd with an iron rule. . . . He is the greatest demagogue in America. The fate of Satan is the fate of Douglas. . . . He now stands a scorched monument of disgrace . . . because of his treason to liberty.'

At the close of this memorable meeting Herndon became the busiest man in town. He was Mayor of Springfield, having been elected by a majority of more than two to one in a contest where the only issue was that of the best man for the office. The reason

[1] *Works*, II, 249–62.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 6, 1854. The correspondent of the *St. Louis Republican* reported that Douglas 'flayed his opponent alive' and that 'the cheers could not be repressed. . . . I state this as a mere witness, having no feeling in the matter; but simply giving my observations.' Clipped in *Washington Sentinel*, Oct. 19, 1854.

for his activity was the holding of a Republican State Convention that night and the political danger which that gathering held for Lincoln.

Fusion of elements opposed to the ruling party had begun and was going on rapidly all over the North. On July 6, 1854, an immense concourse had gathered in an oak grove at Jackson, Michigan, in response to a call signed by ten thousand citizens of that State, and this historic assemblage had adopted a platform and nominated candidates of a new political organization called the Republican Party.

The same coalition under the same name had also formed at various places in New England, Wisconsin, and Ohio, and the merger of various groups into one body, styled the Republican Party, had already become a movement.[1] For many weeks Whig conventions, 'people's' conventions, and 'Fusion' conventions, in various counties throughout Illinois, had been declaring for a new party and adopting the name 'Republican,' as the party designation.[2]

For nearly a month it had been advertised that a convention

[1] *Address:* White, 5, 6, 12.

[2] For example: the *Joliet Signal*, Aug. 8, 1854, said that the Republican Party of that District was made up of Whigs, Abolitionists, and dissatisfied Democrats, and that the Fusion convention at Ottawa — a 'gathering of the turbulent and fanatical and the destructive and the revolutionary' — adopted the name 'Republican party.'

The *Ottawa Free Trader*, Aug. 5, 1854, described this same meeting as made up of 'whigs, abolitionists, know nothings, sore heads, . . . and fag ends in the country under a common name. . . . The proportion of the participants was about 8 whigs and 6 abolitionists, to one democrat.'

The *Rock River Democrat*, Aug. 8, 1854, declared that the 'new party' was composed of Democrats, Whigs, and Free Soilers, 'hunting for a name.'

Early in August, 1854, a meeting at Ottawa adopted the name 'Republican' and called a County Convention of the Republican party for Aug. 30. *Ottawa Weekly Republican*, Aug. 19, 1854.

In the First Congressional District during the same month, the Whigs formally adopted the name 'Republican.' *Free West*, Sept. 7, 1854. That journal, in making note of these conventions said: 'The Republican Party is already begun among the people . . . and so it will be extended . . . to the State organization.'

At the Bloomington Convention, Sept. 12, 1854, there was much wrangling about a party designation, but finally, 'the name Republican was acquiesced in.' *Ottawa Weekly Republican*, Sept. 16, 1854.

About the same time 'The People's Convention,' at Aurora, adopted the name 'Republican.' *Aurora Guardian*, Sept. 21, 1854.

The most active organizer of the Republican Party in Illinois was Ichabod Codding, the abolition and temperance lecturer. The Democrats charged that Codding — 'a sort of political evangelist' — was 'in the pay of the fusion leaders of Chicago.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, Sept. 15, 1854.

would be held in Springfield at two o'clock, October 5, for the purpose of forming a State organization of the Republican Party.[1] But Lincoln had made his speech at the hour named; so Ichabod Codding and Owen Lovejoy announced that the meeting would be held that night.[2] Herndon had been 'in conference' with the Fusionists all day, and knew that they planned to get Lincoln to speak for them.[3]

So the junior partner was alarmed. He, himself, was in hearty sympathy with the radicals,[4] but he knew that Lincoln was not;[5] and, what was infinitely more important as a matter of practical politics, he knew that it would never do for Lincoln to be at the Republican meeting. Many old line Whigs in Illinois were still unwilling to abandon their party and distrusted the radicals only less than they abhorred the Democrats. This, too, was Lincoln's position, and, as we shall see, he continued to maintain it for nearly two years after local and state organizations of the Republican Party had been formed. In his prospective race for the Senate, moreover, he would need the support of the stubborn old line Whigs, even more than that of the promoters of the new party, for there were many more Whig candidates for the Legislature than there were Republican candidates. So neither faction must be offended.[6]

Here was a predicament. The alert and resourceful Herndon got Lincoln out of it; he told his partner that he must instantly leave Springfield and stay away until the danger had passed. So, under the pretence of having business in Tazewell county, Lincoln hitched his horse to his ramshackle buggy, and made off on the wobbly but effective wheels of political prudence; and 'he did not return till the apostles of Abolitionism had separated

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 6, 1854.

The notice in the *Free West*, Sept. 7, 1854, was: 'A Convention of all the citizens of . . . Illinois who are opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and to the further extension and consolidation of the slave power . . . will be held on the 5th day of October, A.D., 1854, at 2 o'clock, at Springfield, for the organization of a party which shall put the Government upon a Republican tack. . . . Papers throughout the State please copy.' *Ottawa Weekly Republican*, Aug. 12, 1854, concerning date and place of the Convention.

[2] *Address:* White, 12. [3] Herndon, II, 371–2. [4] *Address:* White, 12.

[5] 'He was too conservative for some of us.' Herndon to Weik, Oct. 28, 1885. Weik MSS.

[6] Herndon, II, 372.

and gone to their homes.' [1] Also Herndon saw Zebina Eastman of Chicago, editor of the Abolition organ of Illinois, who had come to Springfield to attend the Republican Convention. Herndon convinced Eastman that Lincoln was with them, and word to that effect was passed among the faithful.[2]

That night 'the friends of freedom' met in the Hall of Representatives, listened to fiery speeches, organized a Republican State Central Committee, and adopted resolutions most of which Lincoln disapproved.[3] Lincoln was chosen as a member of the State Central Committee, an honor which he declined, as we shall presently see. In fact not many attended, but the meeting made up in enthusiasm what it lacked in numbers.[4]

The Democratic organ was quick to make conspicuous the endorsement of Lincoln by the radicals. 'It was impossible for this black republican concern to carry on its proceedings without a decided expression in some way of the feelings of the ismites, resulting from Mr. Lincoln's speech,' said the *State Register*. 'Ichabod raved, and Lovejoy swelled, and all indorsed the sentiments of that speech. . . . They hoped that all would go home remembering the speech . . . that they might *know* that one great whig had fallen into their fold.' [5]

While the small but noisily earnest Republican Convention was in session, a big crowd of Democrats gathered in the rotunda of the State House where General Singleton, a 'Nebraska' Whig, and Major Thomas L. Harris, the Democratic candidate for Congress, spoke to the multitude in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska Act.[6] During the remainder of Fair Week, the debate

[1] Herndon, II, 372. This 'saved Lincoln.' Also *Address:* White, 12.

[2] Eastman to Herndon, Jan. 2, 1866. Weik MSS.

[3] The resolutions declared that Kansas and Nebraska should be restored 'to the position of free territories;' that the Fugitive Slave Law should be repealed; that slavery should be restricted 'to those States in which it exists;' that slavery in the District of Columbia should be abolished; that slavery should be abolished wherever Congress had jurisdiction; that no more slave States should be admitted; that no further territory should be acquired 'unless slavery shall have been therein forever prohibited.' Nicolay and Hay, I, 386 *n.*

[4] 'Ichabod Codding, the notorious hireling of abolitionism, with a dozen or more congenial spirits . . . met in the hall of the house, with as many more, to devise ways and means . . . of forming a sectional party, and carrying out its nefarious project of dissolving the Union.' *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 7, 1854. Also *ib.*, Oct. 12, 1854.

[5] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 7, 1854. Italics *Register's.* [6] *Ib.*, Oct. 5, 1854.

was continued by Trumbull, Breese, Edmund D. Taylor, and John Calhoun.[1]

Trumbull was the foremost of the anti-Nebraska Democrats in Illinois and one of the ablest of those party dissenters in the whole country. He was a candidate for Congress in the Eighth District, and his speech opening his campaign at Belleville had startled the regular Democracy 'like a clap of thunder in a clear sky.' [2]

Anti-Nebraska papers and speakers had acclaimed Trumbull as the strongest accession to their ranks, and the *Illinois Journal* praised him with the fervor which a party organ always bestows on a recruit from the opposition.[3] From the point of view of party politics in Illinois at that particular time, Trumbull's opposition to Douglas and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, was far more important than that of Lincoln the Whig; for Trumbull was the leader, as he was the hero, of other Democrats who were also defying the regular Democracy and its dashing leader. Presently we shall see these men prove their gratitude and devotion to Trumbull in a hard struggle with Lincoln.

Herndon was tireless. His next move was to get friends to sign a request to Lincoln to follow Douglas 'until he run him into his hole or made him holler, enough!' [4] Accordingly Lincoln was at Peoria when Douglas spoke on the afternoon of Monday, October 16. When he finished, the crowd cheered lustily, the band played, and there was the usual campaign

[1] Herndon, II, 371. *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 6, 1854.

The Weekly *National Intelligencer* said that 'among the most distinguished debaters on one side are Senators SHIELDS and DOUGLAS, and on the other Ex-Senator BREESE, Ex-Representative LINCOLN, and Judge TRUMBULL.'

Shields was very active throughout the campaign and made good speeches. Of these a fair example is one at Springfield, Oct. 16, 1854. *Chicago Times*, Oct. 20, 1854, clipped in Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Oct. 28, 1854.

[2] *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 28, 1854. 'What! Trumbull, the distinguished democrat of Southern Illinois . . . hurling truth, argument and defiance in the teeth of Senator Douglas? . . . It was the death blow to their [regular Democrats] hopes in Bissell's district. The Germans in St. Clair . . . are all with Trumbull — *all to a man*.'

[3] 'This able democrat and southron . . . is a man of decided talent, and most decidedly against slavery and Utah-democracy-slaveites and disunionists . . . who are now bidding high for the Presidency . . . Judge Trumbull has been Secretary of the State of Illinois and Judge of the Supreme Court, and this guarantees the fact of his ability and integrity.' *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 30, 1854.

[4] B. F. Irwin to Herndon, Feb. 8, 1866. Weik MSS. Those signing this request to Lincoln were B. F. Irwin, Wm. Jayne, John Cassady, and Pascal Enos.

enthusiasm. Then came calls for Lincoln.[1] He said that it was too late to speak then, but that he would talk that night. After supper, when the candles were lighted, Lincoln again made the Springfield speech, with additions of answers to points made by Douglas when closing the debate at that place.[2]

It availed Douglas nothing to deny that the Kansas-Nebraska Act would extend slavery and was designed to extend it, Lincoln said; for 'the world believed at the start, and will continue to believe' that such was the intention and that such would be the effect of that law. That was the 'countenance' of it, and it could not be changed — 'you can as easily argue the color out of the negro's skin. Like the "bloody hand," you may wash it and wash it, the red witness of guilt still sticks and stares horribly at you.'

Equally absurd was Douglas's point that 'congressional intervention never prevented slavery anywhere,' and that the principle of local self-government had expelled slavery in the free States. 'The northwest shore of the Ohio River is entirely free from it, while the southeast shore, less than a mile distant . . . is entirely covered with it.' What worked that miracle, but the Ordinance of 1787? Lincoln asked.[3] It was the same in Illinois and Missouri, with only the Mississippi River between them. While both were Territories, the Ordinance excluded slavery from Illinois and nothing kept it out of Missouri. So the number of slaves in Missouri increased over seven thousand and decreased fifty-one in Illinois in a single decade. 'Can any one doubt as to the reason of it?'

Douglas's assertion that Illinois came into the Union as a slave State was simply untrue, and Lincoln gave a swift historical summary. So far from 'the principles of the Nebraska bill' having expelled slavery from Illinois, the 'principle of the bill first planted it here.' Was it not, rather, 'the principle of the

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 21, 1854.

[2] *Works*, II, 190. 'At Springfield . . . I had spoken substantially as I have here.' *Ib.*, 249. Also *Address:* White, 11. And *Trumbull:* White, 40. 'In other respects they [Springfield and Peoria speeches] were the same.'

'Douglas sat on a front bench within ten or twelve feet of Lincoln during the whole of the latter's speech.' *Address:* White, 12.

[3] *Works*, II, 249–50.

Revolution' which caused the free States to abolish slavery?

The argument that the principle of self-government began when God placed good and evil before man, gave him the ability to choose and made him responsible, was not supported by the facts, Lincoln asserted. 'God did not place good and evil before man, telling him to make his choice;' God told man that he should not eat of the fruit of one tree, upon pain of certain death: that was stronger than any penalty that even Lincoln could wish against slavery in Nebraska.

The argument was the same as that for 'the divine right of kings.' By the one the monarch was responsible only to God for what he did with 'his white subjects;' and by the other, the white man was responsible only to God for what he did with his 'black slaves.' [1]

Douglas was wrong when he said that the Constitution provided for the suppression of the African slave-trade but did not prohibit it in the Territories; for 'the Constitution does not require the action of Congress in either case, and it does authorize it in both.'

As to the basis of representation in Congress, the fact was that in the South 'they count free negroes just as we do' and, in addition to their slaves, they have thirty thousand more free blacks than are in the North. So the advantage of the South over the North 'remains as I have stated it,' Lincoln contended.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act 'differs vitally' from the Utah and New Mexico Act of 1850 and the Washington Territorial Law of 1853: 'It finds no model in any law from Adam till to-day.' It was like Phillips's famous description of Napoleon, said Lincoln: 'Grand, gloomy and peculiar, wrapped in the solitude of its own originality, without a model and without a shadow upon the earth.' [2]

Douglas had said 'in substance that he had always considered this government was made for the white people and not for the negroes. Why, in point of mere fact, I think so too,' avowed Lincoln.[3] But Douglas had 'no very vivid impression that the negro is human, and consequently has no idea that there can be any moral question in legislating about him.'

[1] *Works*, II, 253. [2] *Ib.*, 258–9. [3] *Ib.*, 259.

That was the 'key' to Douglas's mistake '(if there is any such mistake)' in the Kansas-Nebraska Act; he cared as little whether a new country should be slave or free, as whether 'his neighbor shall plant his farm with tobacco or stock it with horned cattle.'

But 'the great mass of mankind . . . consider slavery a great moral wrong.' That feeling was 'eternal. It lies at the very foundation of their sense of justice, and it cannot be trifled with. . . . No statesman can safely disregard it.'

It was a 'bold denial of history' to assert, as Douglas had done, that the Compromise measures of 1850 were not interdependent, or that Illinois did not come into the Union as a free State; 'if we do not know these things, we do not know anything, . . . do not know that we ever had a Revolutionary War or such a chief as Washington. To deny these things is to deny our national axioms, . . . and it puts an end to all argument. If a man will stand up and assert, and repeat and reassert, that two and two do not make four, I know nothing in the power of argument that can stop him. . . . I cannot work any argument into the consistency of a mental gag and actually close his mouth with it. . . . I can only commend him to the seventy thousand answers just in from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana.' [1]

In the October elections, those States had reversed, by heavy majorities, their verdict of two years earlier; and this result plainly indicated the general outcome throughout the North in November.[2] This heartened Lincoln; but it did not dismay Douglas. Both men continued their appeals to the people, though not again did they meet on the stump during that campaign.

At this point comes another of those complexities in Lincoln's career, which defy explanation. About two weeks after the election and when he was an avowed candidate for Senator, Lincoln is reported to have told Herndon and two or three other friends in his office, that, when the Peoria debate was over, Douglas had proposed and Lincoln agreed, that neither man should speak again during the campaign.

[1] *Works*, II, 261–2. The *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 14, 1854, printed the returns of the elections in those three States.

[2] The Democratic press attributed these October defeats chiefly to the Know-Nothings and prohibitionists — 'the Nebraska humbug' was used merely as a weapon. *Indiana State Sentinel*, Oct. 14, 17, 19, 1854.

Douglas 'flattered me,' said Lincoln, 'by saying that I was giving him more trouble than all his opponents in the Senate, combined,' and made the proposal stated which Lincoln accepted; and neither spoke at Lacon next day, Douglas excusing himself on the ground of hoarseness and Lincoln ostensibly refusing to take advantage of Douglas's sore throat. But the following day, Douglas spoke at Princeton, thus violating the agreement, and this breach of faith angered Lincoln, who had honorably kept the compact.[1] Such is the tale that has gone into history.

Another ardent and trustworthy supporter of Lincoln, Dr. Robert Boal of Lacon, tells a different story. He and Silas Ramsey went to Peoria in a buggy to get Lincoln to go back with them to Lacon and again answer Douglas who was to speak there next day. Lincoln complied and the three made the trip together. During the hours they were thus together, testifies Boal, they talked about the meeting; but Lincoln said nothing of an agreement with Douglas not to speak.

So Boal is positive and emphatic that no such arrangement ever was made, and says that Douglas spoke at Princeton as announced and advertised.[2] If he did say that he would stop speaking during the last two weeks of the campaign if Lincoln would agree not to speak again, it was the only time in his life that Douglas ever asked quarter of any man or combination; and it was the most uncharacteristic thing that fearless and combative man ever did.[3]

For the remainder of the campaign, the antagonists spoke separately. One night in the court room at Urbana, 'lit with a

[1] B. F. Irwin to Herndon, Feb. 14, 1866. Weik MSS., endorsed by Isaac Cogdale and P. L. And see Herndon, II, 373–4.

'Princeton, Wednesday, Oct. 18,' appears in the list of Douglas's regular appointments in the *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 5, 1854, after 'Peoria, Monday, Oct. 16,' and 'Lacon, Tuesday, Oct. 17.'

[2] Boal to Herndon, March 5, 1866. Weik MSS. Boal's account is supported by E. N. Powell to Herndon, Feb. 10, 1866. Weik MSS.

Boal was a candidate for the Legislature, was elected and was one of the fifteen members who unwaveringly voted for Lincoln for Senator until Lincoln directed him to go to Trumbull. See p. 287, *infra*.

[3] Johnson discredits this story because of its slight support, because such a request was unlike Douglas, and because he and Lincoln continued to speak thereafter as though no such arrangement had been made. *Douglas:* Johnson, 266.

few tallow candles,' Lincoln repeated his Peoria speech with much effect [1] and to the particular delight of young Whitney, who gives us an account of it. Next morning, says Whitney, Lincoln 'went north via I.C.R.R. and as he went in an Old bus, he played on a boy [jews] harp all the way to the depot.' [2]

Toward the close of the campaign Lincoln spoke in Chicago. 'His speech . . . was as thorough an exposition of the Nebraska iniquity as has ever been made and his eloquence greatly impressed all his hearers,' ran the account in the *Chicago Journal;* 'but it was manifest, as he frequently remarked, that "he could not help feeling foolish in answering arguments which were no arguments at all."'

Here we get an example of the personal appeal to the public in Lincoln's behalf, which was so powerful an influence in his political advancement. 'Mr. Lincoln has seen something of life — not in the common acceptation of the phrase but in reality,' declared the Chicago newspaper, before describing Lincoln's speech. 'Born of parents who could only give him faith in rectitude and virtue, he has become what he is through the trials of poverty and by the sweat of his brow. How he guided a flatboat over the Ohio, or how he afterwards had his last article of property consisting of a chain and compass, sold under the sheriff's hammer, are matters of small interest now. How he became the most powerful speaker and one of the ablest lawyers in the West are of more moment.' [3]

Wherever Lincoln had appeared before or wherever he spoke thereafter, such tales of his humble origin, his early hardships and struggles, and his rise in spite of all drawbacks, were industriously told. In this fashion, as well as by his manner and talk, the feeling steadily grew that Lincoln was indeed a man of the people — a poor boy who had surmounted the hardest and highest obstacles, a typical American whose career showed what any hard working and right living young man of natural talent, could do for himself.

[1] Isaac N. Phillips to Weik, July 9, 1909, quoting a line from *Urbana Union*, Oct. 26, 1854. Weik MSS.

[2] Whitney's statement (no date). Weik MSS. Whitney, 215, gives Oct. 24 as the date of the Urbana speech.

[3] *Chicago Journal*, clipped in *Illinois Journal*, Nov. 3, 1854.

'This nation is to become a nation of slaves or a nation of freemen,' declared the *Illinois Journal* two days after the Peoria speech; but hastily added, 'we are not abolitionists.' [1] In such cautious fashion as the campaign drew to a close did the elements opposed to Democracy advance toward the doctrine of universal freedom. Here, too, we find the statement which we shall hear Lincoln again make two years later in one of the most celebrated speeches of his life; for it is almost certain that he wrote this editorial.[2]

At the election the Democracy was overwhelmed throughout the North. Although not so great as the Fusion victories in other States, the anti-Nebraska success in Illinois was notable. Five Fusionists were elected to Congress [3] and the four Democrats who won did so by reduced majorities.[4] While the Democratic candidate for State Treasurer was elected, the anti-Nebraska men carried the Legislature, but their coalition was unstable. Yet newspapers attached to the new party claimed that the election was 'Republicanism Triumphant.' [5]

Douglas ascribed the Democratic defeat almost entirely to the work of the Know-Nothings; [6] but he did not despair, and, with that curious mingling of courage and optimism which distinguished him, made a remarkable speech at a banquet in Chicago, the night after the election, in which he actually sounded a note of triumph.[7] The Democratic press, however, made accurate analysis of the causes of the party catastrophe. 'The Democratic banner has gone down before a torrent of

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 18, 1854.

[2] It had a bad effect in Springfield, and the next day the *Illinois Journal* emphasized its hostility to abolitionism: 'Abolition is an odious ephithet among us; and we do not believe that there are a dozen men . . . in Sangamon County to whom it can be properly applied.' *Illinois Journal*, Oct. 19, 1854.

[3] 1st Dist., Elihu B. Washburne; 2nd Dist., James H. Woodworth; 3rd Dist., Jesse O. Norton; 4th Dist., James Knox; 8th Dist., Lyman Trumbull. *Illinois Journal*, Nov. 13, 1854.

[4] 5th Dist., W. A. Richardson; 6th Dist., Thomas L. Harris; 7th Dist., James C. Allen; 9th Dist., Samuel S. Marshall.

[5] *Aurora Guardian*, Nov. 9, 1854.

[6] See his remarks in the Senate, Feb. 23, 1855. *Cong. Globe*, 33rd Cong. 2d Sess., xxxi, Appendix, 215.

[7] This speech was published in full in the *Chicago Times*, Nov. 14, 1854, in the Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 2, 1854, and in many other papers, Whig as well as Democratic. It is one of the most brilliant speeches Douglas ever made.

abolitionism, Whigism, freesoilism, religious bigotry and intolerance,' wailed the *Joliet Signal*.[1]

But by far the strongest force that brought about the Democratic overthrow was the general public anger at the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Moreover, this antagonism to the supposed breaking of a 'sacred compact' in order to extend slavery was the biggest hammer wielded in the pounding together of the various elements of opposition and of reform which we have considered.

In the East, however, there was uncertainty for many days as to the complexion of the Legislature of Illinois. Almost two weeks after the election, Shields wrote to Lanphier from Baltimore, where he had gone to see Bissell who had been seriously ill at that place: 'We must save the legislature;' so let Lanphier send Shields a list of the members showing how they stand — 'Douglas and myself acting together here can act upon them at home.' [2]

But Lincoln in Springfield had satisfied himself that a majority of the Legislature were anti-Nebraska men, and he forthwith became an open and active candidate for Shields's place.[3] Promptly he began to write to members and to those who could influence them, frankly asking their support and help. Some of these letters, typical of others that have been lost, reveal again the methods of the seasoned politician in quest of office.

'I should be very grateful if you could make a mark for me among your members,' he wrote to an active party worker in DeWitt County. 'Please write me at all events giving me the names, post-offices, and "*political position*" of members round about you. . . . Let this be confidential.' [4] To a Whig member Lincoln wrote: 'A Whig may . . . be elected to the United States Senate; and I want the chance of being the man. . . . Think it over, and see whether you can do better than go for me. . . . Let

[1] Nov. 14, 1854. This was the general Democratic explanation. The *Washington Sentinel* said that the Democrats were defeated 'by the merger of every ism.' Nov. 22, 1854.

[2] Shields to Lanphier, Nov. 23, 1854. Lanphier MSS.

[3] Soon after the election several papers made note of Lincoln's candidacy. *Chicago Democratic Press*, as quoted in *Belleville Republican*, Dec. 2, 6, 1854; *Illinois State Register* in *Urbana Union*, Dec. 7, 1854, etc.

[4] Lincoln to Charles Hoyt, Nov. 10, 1854. *Works*, II, 262–3.

this be confidential.'[1] From the court room at Clinton, he sent word to a fellow partisan at Paris: 'I have a suspicion that a Whig has been elected to the Legislature from Edgar [County]. If this is not so, why then, "*nix cum arous;*" but if it is so, then could you not make a mark with him for me for U.S. Senator? I really have some chance. Please write me at Springfield giving me the names, post-offices, and political positions of your Representative and Senator. . . . Let this be confidential.'[2]

As in his race for the nomination for Congress, Lincoln was once more untiring and resourceful.[3] 'That man who thinks Lincoln calmly sat down and gathered his robes about him, waiting for the people to call him, has a very erroneous knowledge of Lincoln,' testifies his partner, when speaking of this particular struggle for office. 'He was always calculating, and always planning ahead. His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest. . . . His canvass . . . was marked by his characteristic activity and vigilance. During the anxious moments that intervened between the general election and the assembling of the Legislature he slept, like Napoleon, with one eye open.'[4]

Lincoln had been elected to the Legislature and so had Logan, each by a majority of about six hundred;[5] but, regarding this as an obstacle to his Senatorial plans, Herndon says, Lincoln resigned. The Democratic organ, when announcing the resignation, stated the reason and made an accurate forecast: 'Considering that Mr. Lincoln was, before the election, exceedingly desirous of the office, . . . why does he resign? The answer is plain enough. He seeks an election to the United States senate, *vice* Gen. Shields. In figuring up, his friends make his *possible* vote fifty-one on joint ballot, provided his vote should be included, which usage would necessarily prevent, and he could not afford to throw away his vote upon another candidate. To overcome this difficulty he has declined the seat, to fill it with a Lincoln man.

'*There is no chance for Mr. Lincoln. One of the whigs counted*

[1] Lincoln to T. J. Henderson, Nov. 27, 1854. *Ib.*, 263.
[2] Lincoln to Robert Mosely, Nov. 11, 1854. Herndon, II, 375.
[3] *Address:* White, 38. [4] Herndon, II, 375. [5] *Ib.*, 374–5.

on for him is a Nebraska man, and pledged to oppose any anti-Nebraska candidate. The anti-Nebraska democrats will oppose him, unitedly.' [1]

Nor were prospects of Republican support more encouraging. 'Mr. Lincoln is a Know Nothing,' asserted the *Free West*, 'and expects the full vote of the Republicans as well as the influence of the Know Nothings. . . . Our opposition is based upon short comings on the Republican basis. He is reported to be a Compromise Whig, and having a full attachment to that mummy of a party, which has . . . brought upon us all the calamities and defeats of the Republican movement. He dares not oppose the fugitive slave law — and he would not pledge himself not to go against the admission of any more Slave States.' [2]

After the election Ichabod Codding asked Lincoln to attend a meeting of the Republican State Central Committee. Lincoln brusquely declined. 'I have been perplexed some,' he wrote to Codding, 'to understand why my name was placed on that committee.' He had not been consulted, Lincoln complained, and, indeed, never had heard of it until he 'discovered it by accident two or three weeks afterward.' [3]

He was as much opposed to slavery as 'any member of the Republican party,' he told Codding; but he had 'supposed' that the extent of his opposition 'practically, was not at all satisfactory to that party.' The Republican leaders had heard the discussion between him and Douglas, said Lincoln, 'and had full opportunity to not misunderstand my position. Do I misunderstand them? Please write and inform me.' [4]

What answer Codding made, or whether Lincoln's name was kept on the Republican State Central Committee, is not known. It appears only that, in view of the approaching election of Senator, he was prudently circumspect. He continued to write

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Dec. 2, 1854. Italics author's.

[2] *Free West*, Dec. 14, 1854.

[3] Between Oct. 28 and Nov. 10, 1854. This assertion is hard to understand unless, perhaps, Lincoln was not at or in touch with Springfield during those weeks; for the *State Register*, Oct. 14, 1854, had made conspicuous editorial comment upon the appointment of Lincoln as a member of the Republican State Central Committee, and said that it proved him to be an Abolitionist.

[4] Lincoln to I. Codding, Nov. 27, 1854. *Works*, II, 264.

friends 'confidential' letters asking for support; but when he thought one of them might wish the place, Lincoln, with mingled generosity and deftness, recognized it. 'You have as just claims to the place as I have,' he told Gillespie; but if Gillespie would not be a candidate, then 'I should like to be remembered affectionately by you; and also to have you make a mark for me with the Anti-Nebraska members down your way.' Does Trumbull intend 'to make a push'? It will be hard to 'unite our forces. . . . If I could have your support, my chances would be reasonably good.' [1]

Lincoln did not write to 'all the members' in Washburne's Congressional District, since he was a 'total stranger' to them, and the 'indelicacy of the thing' might offend them — so would not Washburne 'drop some of them a line.' And, alas! 'Turner [2] . . . says he is not committed, and will not be until he sees how most effectually to oppose slavery extension.' [3] Again Lincoln wrote to Washburne that friends in Chicago would not answer his letters: 'I cannot get a word from them.' Wentworth would know the situation there. 'I wish you would pump him, and write me what you get from him. . . . Don't let any one know I have written you this.' [4]

The vigilant candidate thus advised another Whig member: 'We shall have a terrible struggle with our adversaries. They are desperate, and bent on desperate deeds.' One of their leaders in Springfield had written to a Democratic member that '"they outnumber us, but we must outmanage them. Douglas must be sustained. . . . We must elect a Nebraska United States senator, or elect none at all."' Such letters, no doubt, were going to all Democratic members. So consider 'how we can best meet, and foil, and beat them.' But 'do not speak of the Ne-

[1] Lincoln to Gillespie, Dec. 1, 1854. *Ib.*, 265.

[2] Thomas J. Turner of Stephenson County, who became Speaker of the House. Turner voted for Lincoln on the first two ballots, but thereafter withheld his vote. He had been a colleague of Lincoln's in Congress.

[3] Lincoln to Washburne, Dec. 11, 1854. *Works*, II, 266–7. In this letter Lincoln tells Washburne that one old Whig friend was beaten for the Legislature by a single vote, although, perhaps, by fraud: 'I have just examined the returns from that county at the secretary's [of State] office. . . . Our friends, however, are hot on the track, and will probe the matter to the bottom.'

[4] *Ib.*, Dec. 14, 1854. *Ib.*, 267–8.

braska letter mentioned above; I do not wish it to become public that I receive such information.' [1]

A member from Winnebago thought that Lincoln might not represent the whole State impartially: so Lincoln wrote Washburne that Northern Illinois always got his vote in the Legislature, when it was requested; that Washburne could testify that when Lincoln was in Congress and 'Mr. Turner was the legal member and you were a lobby member from your then district,' they always had Lincoln's 'feeble service for the asking' — of course he would be the 'impartial representative of his whole State' if elected to the Senate.[2]

When the Legislature organized, Lincoln telegraphed news of the result to Washburne, and then wrote to him more fully. The anti-Nebraska men had elected all officers of both houses, said Lincoln, albeit some of them were Nebraska men — a manœuvre to get 'one or two Nebraska Senators to go for bringing on the senatorial election.' There were 'ten or a dozen' anti-Nebraska men who were 'willing to be known as candidates' and 'fifty secretly watching for a chance,' said Lincoln. He had twenty-six committals, he added, which were more than any one else had; but 'there are more than twenty-two Anti-Nebraska members who are not committed to me.' Lincoln gave Washburne a statement in figures of the alignment in the Legislature — fourteen anti-Nebraska majority, a curious error to be explained only by Lincoln's anxiety to hope for the best.

But a misfortune had befallen Lincoln, although, in his enthusiasm, he seemed not to realize how serious that mishap was. Sangamon County had elected a Nebraska man to Lincoln's place in the House. They pretended to make no fight, he declared, but secretly told their men to be at the polls; the day was rainy, and they 'got a complete snap judgment on us' — over a thousand Whigs did not vote. But no matter — 'the result is not of the least consequence.' [3] The *Journal* contended that the result was due to perfect Democratic organization and 'still hunt.' [4] No lamer explanation of a defeat was ever put forward

[1] Lincoln to T. J. Henderson, Dec. 15, 1854. *Ib.*, 268–9.
[2] Lincoln to Washburne, Dec. 19, 1854. *Ib.*, 269–70.
[3] *Ib.*, Jan. 6, 1854. *Ib.*, II, 271–3. [4] Dec. 30, 1854.

OLD STATE HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

by politicians. The election was on December 23, and at that time it appeared that every vote would be needed in the Legislature about to assemble. On that morning the *State Register* printed at the head of its editorial page, under the caption 'THE ELECTION TODAY,' a strong editorial for the Democratic candidate, Jonathan McDaniel.[1]

McDaniel was elected and Lincoln thus lost and the regular Democracy gained one vote in the General Assembly. The incident is peculiarly noteworthy in the story of Lincoln's career, since it is the only known political contest in which he was interested that he neglected. Unless the people had changed their minds and deliberately chose a Nebraska Democrat, the only possible explanation for Lincoln's oversight is that he was so intent upon his task of getting pledges from members of the Legislature in other counties, that he forgot to look after the critically important election at home.

Not often in the history of any State has a Legislature been so divided as that of Illinois on the election of a Senator of the United States; seldom have so many confusing elements existed. Among the Democratic members who had gone over to the anti-Nebraska forces were Norman B. Judd of Chicago, John M. Palmer of Carlinville, and Burton C. Cook of Ottawa, who had been elected to the State Senate in 1852. Another hold-over Senator, Uri Osgood, came from a district which, in November, 1854, had given an anti-Nebraska majority,[2] but he remained a regular Democrat, except when he voted to hold a joint session for the election of a Senator.

If these Democrats could induce Whig and Free-Soil members to vote with them, they could elect a successor to Shields, and break up the Democratic organization. But this could not be done if the Whigs stood together; in that case perhaps an election of Senator might be prevented altogether. For there was no law requiring a joint session of the two Houses, and by rigid adherence to old party lines either House might

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Dec. 23, 1854. There were four candidates for Lincoln's seat, N. M. Broadwell, Joseph Inslee, S. B. Smith, and Jonathan McDaniel. 'Of the four, the latter, in our opinion, is the most unexceptionable man.' He was elected by a majority of eighty-two. *Address:* White, 38.

[2] *Trumbull:* White, 41.

refuse to meet with the other, a not uncommon situation.[1]

With utmost frankness, Lanphier wrote to Douglas at Washington describing the deplorable party situation. The harassed Senator answered with equal unreserve in a letter marked 'CONFIDENTIAL.' The advice of the Illinois delegation in Congress, said Douglas, was to 'nominate Shields by acclamation, and nail his flag to the mast, and never haul it down under any circumstances or for anybody. The election of any other man would be deemed not only a defeat, but an ungrateful desertion of him, when all the others who voted with him had been sustained.

'We are of the opinion also that the Whigs will stick to Lincoln to the bitter end, even if it resulted in no choice this session, and the consequent postponement of the election, under the belief that they can carry the State next time for a Whig-Know-Nothing candidate for the Presidency and with him the Legislature.

'We also think that Bissel will be a candidate [for Senator] and will secretly urge his friends to press his name. In that event, it is probable the free-soil or Anti-Nebraska Democrats will cling to him until the last with the hope of bringing the Whigs over to Bissel.' This was the very thing they did for Trumbull.

But, Douglas continued, that or no election 'would be better than the election of Lincoln or any other man spoken of. At all events our friends should stand by Shields and throw the responsibility on the Whigs of beating him BECAUSE HE WAS BORN IN IRELAND.

'The Nebraska fight is over, and Know Nothingism has taken its place as the chief issue of the future. If therefore Shields shall be beaten it will be apparent to the people and to the whole country that a gallant soldier and a faithful public servant has been stricken down because of the place of his birth.

'Let this be made the issue in the Newspapers and in the Legislature and everywhere; and with reference to this issue let us rise or fall with Shields.

'This is the advice of our friends here. We think that this line

[1] *Trumbull:* White, 41.

of policy will probably lead to a postponement of the election, and in that event let every paper in the State put Shields' name at the head of its columns for Senator and keep it there until after the next legislative election.

'We are sure to triumph in the end on this great issue. Our policy and duty require us to stand firm by the issues in the late election, and to make no bargains, no alliances, no concessions to any of the *allied isms*.

'Let this letter be strictly confidential and show it to nobody except our friend T. L. Harris.[1] I have no secrets from him. I have implicit confidence in his discretion, firmness, and fidelity. Tell him that he must take personal charge of everything, and in no event leave Springfield even for a day during the Session.' [2]

So Harris took command of the regular Democracy in the Legislature. But Bissell did not become a candidate for Senator; instead Trumbull was put forward by Palmer, Judd, Cook, and two Democratic Representatives. These Democrats had refused to go into a caucus of their party — they wished to control their forty-two 'former party associates,' said the *State Register*, or else to unite with 'whigs, abolitionists, know-nothings and fusionists,' with whom the bolters agreed on nothing except the Kansas-Nebraska Act.[3] It soon became clear to everybody that the Democratic insurgents would never go to Lincoln or any other old line Whig, nor yet to Shields, nor to any 'Nebraska Democrat' whomsoever.

[1] Democratic Representative in Congress from the Springfield District, who had just been elected over Richard Yates.

[2] Douglas to Lanphier, Washington, Dec. 18, 1854. Lanphier MSS. Capitals Douglas's.

The *Journal* would not cease attacking Douglas. Just before the Legislature met, it accused him of speculating in Nebraska lands. *Illinois Journal*, Dec. 21, 1854.

While the Senatorial contest was going on in the Legislature, the *Journal* printed a letter purporting to be from a man in Mississippi to the editor of a Texas newspaper; the writer said that the news from Illinois was 'more favorable to the south than was anticipated.' Douglas had been there and assured his friends that 'Illinois will retrieve herself fully. I hope so. Mr. Douglas has a plantation and negroes in Lawrence county, and has no idea of losing it by the schemes of the free soilers.'

Upon this the *Journal* commented at length: 'Now with Senator Douglas's fortune in plantations and negroes in the South, is it possible that he can truly represent the sentiments of a *Free* State? Are not all his feelings and interests southern? . . . "Where the treasure is, there is the heart also."' *Illinois Journal*, Jan. 9, 1855.

[3] *Illinois State Register*, Jan. 6, 1855.

The Democratic organization could not permit a Democrat who had fought the party on the one issue that had been made a test of party fealty, to be chosen Senator over Shields who had stood faithfully by the party program. Neither could the organization afford to allow the insurgent Democrats to dictate the choice of Senator in any case.

Moreover all regular Democrats hated Trumbull and other active party dissenters with that peculiar virulence usually shown toward such disturbers. Trumbull, especially, was the object of their wrath, for he had been very active. So had Palmer, Judd, and Cook, whose warfare on Douglas had now developed into an implacable feud. Organization animosity was as acrid toward these men as toward Trumbull himself.

In the thick of plot and counterplot, the Springfield Democratic organ marked the insurgents for political destruction: 'Let the senatorial election result as it may, . . . the democracy will visit upon these men their deserts.' [1] Four days after this outburst the *Chicago Times* urged the Whigs to stand by Lincoln rather than yield to the Democratic 'malcontents.' [2] This meant, of course, the ultimate choice of a regular Democrat, or else no election and the consequent appointment of a Senator by the Democratic Governor.

Lanphier wrote to Shields that the election would go over. In that case, replied Shields, 'we will have a terrible time but I think a glorious victory [in 1856]:' but let the editor get proof of the pledges required by 'Lovejoy & Co.' as the price of their votes for Senator; if that price was the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, restoration of the Missouri Compromise and the like, those Republican radicals would be 'politically doomed.' The Democratic insurgents did not 'care two pins about Nebraska,' said Shields; what they really wanted was a Senator who would 'help them to break down Douglas,' for 'Douglas they have sworn to destroy.' When they fail to find a man 'to aid them against Douglas they will vote for me . . . — say the 80th or one hundredth ballot.' [3]

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Jan. 6, 1855. [2] As quoted in *Era:* Cole, 134.

[3] Shields to Lanphier ('Confidential'), Washington, D.C., Jan. 14, 1855. Lanphier MSS.

Plainly Shields, in Washington, did not yet know that, in Illinois, Palmer, Judd, and Cook had already secured a candidate who would assist them against Douglas and also comply with Lovejoy's demands.

Time and again the Senate refused to concur with the House for a joint session. 'The war of the factions goes on,' said the *Illinois State Register*.[1] On Friday, January 19, both Houses adjourned until Monday and most members went to Chicago or St. Louis.[2] While they were gone the heaviest storm since the 'great snow' fell upon Illinois, and for nearly two weeks the absentees could not get back. Springfield was snow-bound.[3] So not until Monday, February 5, was agreement finally reached in the Senate to meet the House for the Senatorial election.[4]

There were an even hundred members of the General Assembly. Of the twenty-five Senators, nine were Whigs, three were anti-Nebraska Democrats, and thirteen were regular Democrats. Of the seventy-five members of the House, twenty-eight were regular Democrats, and the remainder were anti-Nebraska men of all party affiliations, the largest single group being Whigs. But in the campaign, the anti-Nebraska Democrats had insisted that they represented the genuine and ancient Democracy and would purify the party, and it was impossible for them to vote for a partisan Whig for the national Senate. Also, many Whigs in the Legislature were none too ardent against the Kansas-Nebraska Act.[5]

It soon became apparent that Shields could not be reëlected. So the regular Democrats secretly planned to stampede the joint session for the Democratic Governor, Joel A. Matteson, by combining Shields's strength with that of some of the irregular Democrats and a personal following of the Governor which included certain Whigs.[6] Matteson was a rich man, very popular,

[1] Jan. 13, 1855. [2] *Illinois State Register*, Jan. 20, 1855.

[3] *Ib.*, Jan. 24, 30, Feb. 1, 1855. 'For twelve days not a single northern or eastern mail has reached this city; nor is any likely to reach here for three or four days to come. . . . Between this place and Joliet seventeen engines are locked in the drifts. . . . Springfield is now entirely cut off from all communication with the rest of the world.'

[4] *Senate Journal*, 171–2; *House Journal*, 274–5.

[5] *Era:* Cole, 141–2. *Trumbull:* White, 41–2.

[6] *Address:* White, 16. On the day before the Senatorial election, the Democratic organ stated that Matteson was not a candidate and, like 'nine tenths of the democracy

had contributed liberally to his party's campaign funds, and had never offended the Whigs.[1] Moreover, he had said nothing about the Kansas-Nebraska question, he was a member of the party organization and, as such, not objectionable to Douglas. In short Matteson was in an excellent strategic position, and the plan to elect him might have worked but for a curious and pregnant circumstance.

Gustave Koerner was Lieutenant Governor, and if Matteson was chosen Senator, would become the chief executive of Illinois. He was a man of fine character, good ability, and unusual education. But he was a 'foreigner,' a German immigrant, and like most people of his blood, had opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act because he believed that it extended slavery. The Know-Nothings in the Legislature, whether called Whigs, Free-Soilers or anti-Nebraska Democrats, would not permit Koerner to become Governor; and neither would the Douglas Democrats, who felt that he had deserted the party as Trumbull had done, and were accordingly bitter toward him.[2]

As a matter of preference as well as of party consistency, the anti-Nebraska Democrats were for Trumbull. Like them, he had come out against that measure and made many able speeches, and he had been elected to Congress by a large majority on that issue.

The remaining conspicuous candidate was Lincoln. He was still a Whig and, in addition to the old line members of his party, some anti-Nebraska men in the Legislature agreed to support him, 'mainly because they themselves were of whig sympathies.'[3] But there was no shadow of a possibility of his election, unless his traditional party foes, who agreed with him on nothing except the Nebraska question, would vote for him.

of Illinois,' he was for 'the re-election of the gallant Shields.' *Illinois State Register*, Feb. 7, 1855.

[1] Koerner, I, 601. Matteson was 'a farmer, a manufacturer, a contractor of public works, and a railroad man.'

[2] *Era:* Cole, 134.

After the popular election in November, 1854, the *Illinois Journal* printed several editorials friendly to the Know-Nothings, Nov. 18, Dec. 23, 1854. Yet during the campaign the *Journal* had ardently praised the Germans. For example see long editorial in the issue of Oct. 24, 1854.

[3] *Era:* Cole, 134.

Moreover, Lincoln's hold on his Whig-Free-Soil Republican merger was feeble, and we shall now see it quickly thrown off. Indeed those who had joined the new party voted for him with great reluctance and against the protest of one Abolition-Republican organ. 'We could not advise the republicans to support . . . Lincoln,' warned the *Free West*. 'He is only a Whig, and this people's movement is no Whig triumph.' [1] The disintegration of the fusion began after a single ballot had been cast.

At three o'clock Thursday, February 8, 1855, 'every inch of space' on the floor and in the galleries of the Hall of Representatives was occupied. Among the spectators in the gallery were Mrs. Lincoln and the wife and daughters of Governor Matteson.[2] The joint convention of the Nineteenth General Assembly of Illinois was in session. Shields, Lincoln, Trumbull, Matteson, and four others were formally put in nomination, and the fight that so greatly influenced Lincoln's development and career began.

The forty-five Fusionists who had promised to vote for Lincoln did so on the first ballot. Shields received the full regular Democratic strength of forty-one; while Senators Cook, Judd, and Palmer, with two Representatives, voted for Trumbull. Eight votes were scattered among other candidates. Gillespie voted for Cyrus Edwards.

For six ballots Shields's regulars stood fast, even gaining one on the fifth ballot. Lincoln lost on each of five ballots, touching thirty-four on the fifth and thirty-eight on the seventh, his largest vote after the first ballot. On the sixth trial, with Shields's men still unbroken, not a single vote was cast for Matteson and three Representatives went to a peculiarly violent and very young Democrat who was outspoken in his pro-slavery and Southern sympathies, John A. Logan.[3]

Then Douglas's lieutenant, Thomas L. Harris, in command of the regular Democrats, suddenly executed the Matteson coup. On the seventh ballot Shields's full strength, together with the three members who had just voted for Logan, went to the

[1] *Free West* as quoted in *Joliet Signal*, Dec. 19, 1854. [2] *Trumbull:* White, 42.

[3] Logan was then only twenty-eight years of age. Those voting for him were Hopkins, Gray, and Sams.

Governor. As man after man announced for Matteson, a desperate effort was made to rally the shattered Lincoln forces, but with scant success — only two returned.[1]

Lincoln's support now swiftly crumbled — on the eighth ballot but twenty-seven of his original forty-five remained. Matteson rose to forty-six, only five short of election; while Trumbull shot up to eighteen, eight of them going to him from Lincoln. Obviously, either Trumbull or Matteson would soon be chosen.

In view of his skill as a politician, it is hard to understand why, under the circumstances, Lincoln risked another ballot, for the speedy election of the Democratic Governor was more than probable. If eagerness had not dulled his judgment, the fact that Mrs. Lincoln was in the gallery is a possible explanation of the hazard he now took; for she was determined that her husband should win, and when, within the hour, she saw the triumph of Trumbull, her anger was so fierce, unreasoning, and permanent, that she refused then and forever afterward to speak to the wife of the victor, Julia Jayne, the intimate of her young womanhood and, until now, her closest friend.

By this time it was certain — indeed it never had been doubtful — that the anti-Nebraska Democrats in the Senate would not go to Lincoln; indeed, they could not be expected to do so in any case, since Lincoln had failed from the first to hold his strength and his supporters were now flocking to Trumbull. Moreover, Matteson was not so objectionable to them as was their old-time political enemy.

Also, in the eyes of his fellow anti-Nebraska Democrats Trumbull was then a more important man than Lincoln and far more deserving of their support. We must bear in mind that, in the winter of 1854–55, no human being, so far as is known, had an inkling of Lincoln's greatness; nor, at that time, did a ray of that fame which was to blaze about his name a decade later penetrate backward from the future through those hidden years.

Prudence, wisdom, custom, every consideration of practical politics — all required Lincoln to 'throw' his support to Trumbull instantly. Yet Lincoln took one more chance. The result was humiliating — on the ninth ballot only fifteen members

[1] Babcock and Foss.

LYMAN TRUMBULL

continued to vote for him. More of his men flocked to Trumbull, who now had thirty-five in all, and Matteson had forty-seven.

At this point Gillespie asked Lincoln what to do. 'Go for Trumbull by all means,' said Lincoln, 'for if you don't the five anti-Nebraska Democrats who have been voting for Trumbull since the second ballot will go to Matteson and elect him.'[1] So the steadfast fifteen went to Trumbull, who gained another vote besides and, thus, on the tenth ballot was elected by the exact number required.[2]

When the struggle was over, young Whitney went to Lincoln's office and found his hero in the deepest depths of blackest melancholy. Never before or thereafter did Lincoln's associate on the Circuit see him so utterly dejected.[3] Yet that night at a reception given by Ninian W. Edwards Lincoln seemed in good spirits and heartily congratulated the victor.[4] The next day he wrote to Washburne:

'I regret my defeat moderately, but am not nervous about it. . . . Matteson's . . . defeat now gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole, it is perhaps as well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected. The Nebraska men confess that they hate it worse than anything that could have happened. It is a great consolation to see them worse whipped than I am. I tell them it is their own fault — that they had abundant opportunity to choose between him and me, which they declined, and instead forced it on me to decide between him and Matteson.'

Such was the conclusion of a long letter in which Lincoln explained his defeat. He so mixes the account of the political manœuvring before and during the balloting, that his statement somewhat lacks his usual clearness. He started with forty-four votes, he told Washburne; [5] but Matteson had been a candidate

[1] Gillespie to Herndon, Sept. 19, 1866. Weik MSS., partly copied in Herndon, II, 377 *n.* Gillespie adds that Lincoln said that the election of Matteson 'would be an everlasting disgrace to the State.' This is hard to understand since, at that time, the Governor was in excellent repute.

[2] For the ballotings in this historic contest see *House Journal*, 19th General Assembly of Illinois, 348–61.

[3] Whitney to Weik (no date). Weik MSS. [4] *Trumbull:* White, 45.

[5] The *House Journal* shows that Lincoln received forty-five on the first ballot.

'secretly . . . ever since (before, even) the fall election,' and got four to six members 'to really prefer his election to that of any other man — all *sub rosa*, of course.'

Although they were anti-Nebraska men, they were Democrats, they came from counties bordering on the Canal, and they were 'old personal friends' of the Governor. So Matteson had convinced them that he, too, was anti-Nebraska, or 'at least could be secured to be so by instructions' from the Legislature. One of these very men had voluntarily told Lincoln that he 'would walk a hundred miles to elect' him, yet, after a few ballots, he had flopped to Matteson.

The Nebraska men did not want the Governor, said Lincoln, but 'tardily determined to let him get whomever of our men he could, by whatever means he could, and ask him no questions.' Then others deserted Lincoln, he continued; and, although what was left of the anti-Nebraska force were willing to go into caucus where Lincoln could get the nomination, the five original Trumbull men [1] 'and two or three of the secret Matteson men,' were not willing — they '"could never vote for a Whig,"' they said, and this angered the Whigs, who retorted that they would not support any candidate of these unyielding anti-Nebraska Democrats.

So, apparently, Matteson was master of the situation, Lincoln admitted. 'We saw into it plainly ten days ago, but with every possible effort could not head it off.' Thus, when the balloting began, the Nebraska men were sure that Matteson would be elected and Lincoln and his friends thought so too. The vote for Shields was only a pretence of good faith, Lincoln charged, while the vote for Lincoln by 'secret' Matteson men was the same. Finally the Nebraska men threw off the mask and went solidly for Matteson.

Then Lincoln gave so strange an excuse for his loss of votes that it must be stated in his own words: 'In the mean time our friends, with a view of detaining our expected bolters [to Matteson], had been turning from me to Trumbull till he had risen to 35 and I had been reduced to 15. These would never desert me

[1] Senators Judd, Cook, Palmer, and Representatives Baker and Allen of Madison County.

except by my direction; but I became satisfied that if we could prevent Matteson's election one or two ballots more, we could not possibly do so a single ballot after my friends should begin to return to me from Trumbull. So I determined to strike at once, and accordingly advised my remaining friends to go for him, which they did and elected him on the tenth ballot. Such is the way the thing was done.' [1]

Although Lincoln wanted the office himself, said the *Illinois Journal* in its brief account of the contest, 'when it became apparent that he could not be elected, he pressed his friends to vote for Mr. Trumbull,' and they did so. But let Trumbull understand that 'it was not "because they loved Cæsar less, but because they loved Rome more."' The Douglas men did not want Matteson, the *Journal* said, but, since they could not elect Shields, they hoped that 'the known personal popularity of Gov. Matteson' would give him the necessary additional votes. But Lincoln's strategy spoiled their plan: so, 'Greetings to the Anti-Nebraska men throughout our wide land! ILLINOIS HAS SPOKEN!' [2]

The *Journal's* editorial enraged Lanphier. Dipping his pen in gall, he assailed Trumbull — a political traitor who 'months ago had gone into a secret midnight caucus with the *Journal* man, Lincoln, . . . and plotted the overthrow of the Democratic party.' The Democratic editor asserted that, even after the Legislature met, Trumbull and Lincoln had made a deal of mutual support for Senator then and four years later. From that moment, the *State Register* was certain that Lincoln would oppose Douglas in 1858.

The *Illinois Journal's* boast that Trumbull had been elected by Lincoln's friends at his request, 'more clearly confirms all that we have heretofore charged of the base coalition between these men,' wrathfully continued Lanphier. 'It was intended that Lincoln should be the man. But Lincoln was to be cheated at his own game, and Trumbull did it. . . . Lincoln "pressed his friends."' Huh! — 'he made a virtue of necessity, in hope that the day of recompense may yet come round, and when Trumbull

[1] Lincoln to Washburne, Feb. 9, 1855. *Works*, II, 274–7.

[2] *Illinois Journal*, Feb. 9, 1855. Capitals *Journal's*.

will aid in foisting him into the Senate as he had aided Trumbull.' [1]

Democrats in Washington lamented Shields's defeat — 'that gallant soldier and statesman was one of the noblest victims of the traitorous coalition of Know nothings, abolitionists and trading politicians,' furiously cried the *Washington Sentinel*.[2]

Greeley rejoiced. Trumbull was a true man. 'This glorious result is a fitting finale to the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise by Douglas & Co., who have made their boasts that the recent Illinois election was a Nebraska triumph, and that there would be no election for Senator this winter.' [3]

But no newspaper, except those of Springfield, said anything about Lincoln.

Thus in the shivering little town of Springfield during the boisterous winter in 1854–55 was repeated a process old as politics — men rose and fell, ambitions were shattered or, for the moment, gratified, hatreds lighted, revenges plotted, plans for the future formed. But there and throughout the North was felt that current which was moving with ever-increasing force through stagnant waters; and we shall now see Lincoln, dazed and uncertain at first, caught up by that current, struggle feebly against it, and then, with clear eye and mighty stroke, go forward as it became a rushing torrent.

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Feb. 10, 1855.
[2] *Washington Sentinel*, Feb. 13, 1855.
[3] New York *Tribune*, Feb. 9, 1855.

CHAPTER V

CONFUSION AND DECISION: JOINING THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

The plan of the Emigrant Aid Company was to colonize Kansas, then the border Slave States; and the enterprise was intended to be a money making affair. ELI THAYER.

Great monied corporations are sending armed hordes from the slums of Eastern cities to seize Kansas, steal our property and endanger our lives. Missouri Border Resolutions.

There would have been no trouble in Kansas if emigration had been left to its natural causes and course. DOUGLAS.

If peaceable opposition to the laws of this bogus legislature is not enough, we will resist them to the bloody issue. Free State Resolutions.

Let there be peace. Revolutionize through the ballot-box. Your attempt to resist the laws of Kansas by force is criminal and wicked. LINCOLN.

The Republican party is the organized conscience of the North. It must and will prevail. SUMNER, Dec., 1854.

You inquire where I stand. That is a disputed point. I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs and that I am an Abolitionist. I now go no further than to oppose the extension of slavery. LINCOLN, August, 1855.

'WHEN I received the bond I was dabbling in politics, and of course neglecting business. Having since been beaten out I have gone to work again,' wrote Lincoln to clients, soon after his defeat.[1] So over the dreary miles of the still scantily settled prairies, he once more made his way from court to court.

But Lincoln's heart was not in the practice of the law. Unceasingly he talked politics. His fits of melancholy became deeper and more prolonged, his periods of unseeing abstraction more intense, his outbursts of humor more startling.

With an eye on his political future, Lincoln took pains to please newspaper men. He sent ten dollars to Jacob Harding, an editor in central Illinois, because he had been reading Harding's paper for three or four years and had paid nothing for it: so let the editor put the money in his pocket, 'saying nothing further about it.' Soon afterward Lincoln wrote an article on politics and sent it to Harding with a request that he publish it in his 'valued paper.' The editor refused. 'I long ago made it a rule to publish nothing as editorial matter not written by my-

[1] Lincoln to Sanford, Porter and Striker, March 10, 1855. *Works*, II, 278.

self.' Lincoln thought it a good joke: 'That editor has a rather lofty but proper conception of true journalism,' he told Herndon, with a laugh.[1]

An incident in the Legislature two days after the election of Trumbull to the National Senate showed the bitter resentment of Lincoln's old Whig friends toward the Republican radicals who had deserted him. In resisting two resolutions offered by the Speaker, Thomas J. Turner, one against the acquisition of territory unless slavery were prohibited and the other for the amendment of the Fugitive Slave Law so as to give runaways the right of jury trial and habeas corpus,[2] Logan, 'nearly choking with emotion,' made a revealing speech:

'The whigs have been rode, and rode, and rode to death. . . . The whigs had been permitted to make a race for senator, just fast enough to *lose money*.'[3] Logan had no objection to Trumbull personally, he said, but the ruse by which he was elected was outrageous — those whom Lincoln had 'counted upon and looked to for support had deserted him.' Logan would stand it no longer. 'No!' he shouted, in announcing his vote. The hall rang with cheers for the defiant old Whig.

The Democratic organ exulted. Logan and the Whigs had deserved what they got. For weeks they had truckled to the radicals in order to get them to vote for Lincoln, only to be deserted in the end.[4]

While Logan, 'nearly overcome with grief,' expressed at last his pent-up feelings, his fellow Whigs sat glumly by, and the radicals, though 'looking as guilty as sheep stealers,' grinned

[1] Lincoln to Harding, May 25, 1855. Herndon, II, 376. This letter is not printed in Lincoln's *Works*, but is in Tracy, 57. Harding edited the *Prairie Beacon*, published at Paris, Edgar County.

[2] Turner offered four resolutions. The first was for the restoration of the Missouri Compromise and the second against the admission of Kansas or Nebraska as slave States. These were adopted, Logan and the Whigs voting for them. The last two, as stated in the text, were beaten, Logan and the Whigs voting against them. *House Journal*, Feb. 10, 1855, 391–2.

These votes accurately showed the split among the anti-Nebraska fusionists, and the position of Logan and the Whigs was exactly that of Lincoln at that time.

Soon afterwards, other 'abolition resolutions were "jay-hawked"' in like manner. *Illinois State Register*, Feb. 14, 1855.

[3] Italics *Register's*.

[4] *Illinois State Register*, Feb. 12; *Illinois Journal*, Feb. 13, 1855.

derisively.[1] Thus we get a flashing glance at personal antagonisms among men and elements that had yet to be merged into a single political force.

To bring about united action was a hard task; but we shall presently see Lincoln partly accomplish it, chiefly by putting aside every question which divided men, and centring their minds on the one and only issue upon which they agreed. That issue was opposition to the extension of slavery.

A question immediately arose that called for the use of these sensible tactics. In Illinois those who were united against slavery extension were divided on prohibition. Two days after Lincoln's defeat for the Senate, the Legislature passed the Maine Liquor Law.[2] There had been strong resistance and the friends of the measure won only by conceding two amendments.[3]

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Feb. 12, 1855.

[2] *House Journal*, Session, 1855, 411, Feb. 10; *Laws of Illinois*, 1855, 3–30; *Illinois Journal*, Feb. 12, 1855.

On Feb. 8 the Indiana Legislature passed an almost identical bill. When the final vote was taken, the dense crowd of men and women in the lobbies and galleries greeted the news with 'tremendous applause,' cannon thundered in the streets, bells in churches and engine houses rang for an hour, a big flag was suspended across Washington Street, school children cheered, and that night, the city was illuminated. 'It is indeed a great day for Indiana!' Indianapolis Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, Feb. 8, in issue Feb. 15, 1855.

Similar outbursts of jubilation took place wherever the Maine Law was enacted. By the end of Feb., 1855, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana had adopted prohibition. Mississippi and Texas had also enacted restrictive liquor laws and in other Southern States the movement for temperance legislation was vigorous. Ohio prohibited only the sale of distilled liquors. New York *Tribune*, Feb. 17, 1855.

In New York the fight for the Maine Law had raged throughout 1854. Greeley made it an issue second only in importance to 'the Nebraska fraud.' His leading editorial on election day was typical of like appeals all over the North:

'The morning, long waited for, dawns at last. Soldiers of Temperance, Humanity, and Freedom! your adversary is before you!'

Shall the 'Nebraska fraud' prevail? Shall 'this day's struggle . . . result in the triumph of . . . Rum? . . . Never were Virtue and Vice more fairly confronted in an election. . . .

'Pauperism, Beggary, Vice, Crime, Outrage, Homicide, and Murder, nearly always find their main incitement in the Intoxicating Bowl,' etc. New York *Tribune*, Nov. 7, 1854.

'Is slavery or intemperance the greater evil? The question is a standing one before all the debating societies of the country.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, July 29, 1854.

[3] In the Illinois Legislature the Lieutenant Governor, Gustave Koerner, led the fight against prohibition chiefly on the ground that it would cause worse evils than those it would cure. For brief account of the contest see Koerner, I, 620–2.

'Many of the ablest and most active and most efficient Sons of Temperance, openly

One of these was a referendum to the people at an election to be held June 4, 1855.[1] Logan had charge of the bill on its final passage through the House.[2]

While a majority of the native population was for prohibition, foreign born citizens were almost solidly against it.[3] Of these about ninety thousand were Germans. Their voting strength was not far from twenty thousand.[4] Most of them were Democrats, but all were as much opposed to the extension of slavery as they were to prohibition.

Many native born citizens were of like mind. Among these were some of Lincoln's associates and clients. One of them was Jesse W. Fell of Bloomington, a Quaker who had gone to Illinois from Pennsylvania about the time Lincoln went to New Salem. The two men became friends and, as the years passed, Lincoln relied more and more on his judgment. It was Fell who first proposed a series of joint debates between Lincoln and Douglas, and who first urged publicly that Lincoln should be made the Republican candidate for President; and it was to him that Lincoln wrote for campaign use, in December, 1859, the sketch of his life which has become so famous.[5] A leading anti-slavery man, Fell was in 1855, against prohibition.[6]

On the other hand, Herndon, while not an abstainer himself,

oppose the Maine Liquor Law on the ground that it is rather calculated to retard than advance the cause.' *Illinois State Register*, April 23, 1853.

[1] Koerner, I, *Laws of Illinois*, Act, Feb. 12, 1855. Sec. 40.

The other amendment was that beer could be made for exportation and that cider and wine could be made and sold in quantities of a gallon or more by those who grew their own apples and grapes.

[2] *House Journal*, 397, 411. [3] Koerner, I, 623. *Douglas:* Johnson, 144–5.

[4] Average of census of 1850 and 1860.

In 1855, Whig and Republican papers estimated the German population as greater than it was. As early as 1852, the *Quincy Whig*, of March 23, said that it was 90,000 and that German immigrants were then pouring into Illinois. By 1854 nine German newspapers were published. *Belleville Advocate*, Jan. 18, 1854.

Many German girls were brought to Sangamon County to work in farmers' families. *Illinois Journal*, April 2, 1855.

[5] *Trans. McLean County Historical Society*, III, 22.

[6] Fell MSS. Fell wrote a piece for the *Bloomington Pantagraph* in opposition to that reform. His points were that, in Bloomington, several city ordinances against liquor selling had not been enforced, and could not be; that 'if there is any one fact conclusively proven by popular governments, it is that laws irrespective of their quality — good or bad — to be properly enforced, must have the sanction of the popular voice;' that 'it is all nonsense to say we can enforce law against theft, and therefore why not against that

was hot for prohibition.[1] In 1854, the people of Springfield had voted against the sale of liquor within the city, the Council had acted accordingly,[2] and, as Mayor, Herndon had rigidly enforced the ordinance. He had gone personally to some, if not most of the groceries and 'told them they *must* close their doors,' and had prosecuted those who failed to do so.[3]

In this situation, with anti-slavery men sharply divided on prohibition, the campaign over the new law raged during April and May, 1855. The fight was incredibly abusive.[4] Douglas took no part, on the ground that he never interfered in local disputes.[5] Lincoln, too, kept hands off.[6]

that many regard as bad, the liquor traffic, . . . because all men say theft is a crime that should be punished, and one half, nay a majority in many communities look upon the liquor traffic as *not* a crime.'

Fell had founded the town of Normal, near Bloomington, and established there a training school for teachers. He was highly esteemed for his enterprise, rectitude, and good works.

[1] Herndon to Theodore Parker, Feb. 13, 1855. Newton, 77–8.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, April 19. Many towns did the same. *Ib.*, June 1; *Quincy Whig*, July 17, 1854.

[3] 'Valedictory of Wm. H. Herndon, Mayor of Springfield, on retiring from office.' *Illinois Journal*, April 11, 1855.

Herndon said that during this time 'the great cause of sobriety and temperance has advanced. . . . Women and children can now walk through our streets, highways, and alleys, at all hours, night and day, with scarce a fear of insult or harm. . . .

'There are a few places, yet in our city, where whisky, poisoned and deathful, is sold to the initiated few. Yet . . . not one half as much whisky is drunk now as in former years.'

[4] Koerner, I, 622–3.

[5] *Illinois State Register*, April 20, 1854.

[6] Newton, 77. Not until 1910 was any intimation made that Lincoln took part in this campaign. In that year a letter was published written July 5, 1910, by J. B. Merwin to Dr. F. D. Blakeslee of Binghamton, N.Y., Dist. Supt. Anti-Saloon League. Merwin wrote at Blakeslee's request. *Lincoln and Prohibition:* Charles T. White, 153–7. See Robert T. Lincoln to White, April 30, 1917. *Ib.*, 159–61.

Merwin, a professional temperance lecturer, said in his letter that Lincoln and he stumped Illinois together for prohibition in the campaign of 1855.

Merwin's letter was written when he was over eighty-two years old and fifty-five years after the event concerning which his reminiscence deals. No newspaper published in Illinois at that time mentions Lincoln as being at such meetings, albeit several notices appear of these gatherings and other speakers, and accounts of Lincoln's speeches on other subjects are always given. The Merwin story is on its face obviously imagination. See Barton, II, 450 *n.*

Of like character is the tale that Lincoln wrote the Illinois prohibition Act of 1855. While that measure was under discussion in the Legislature, Lincoln was a candidate for the Senate, and he did not risk the loss of a single vote. Moreover, the bill was almost a duplicate of the Maine Law, was the same then being pressed on the Legislatures of other States and needed no rewriting.

But the *Illinois Journal* strongly advocated the new law.[1] While the stand of the paper, of the junior partner, and of Logan, shows Lincoln's attitude, he said nothing publicly, nor have any private letters by him on the subject yet been discovered. Neither Herndon, nor Whitney, nor Davis, nor Palmer, nor Gillespie, nor Swett, nor Fell, makes any mention whatever of Lincoln in connection with the vigorous and noisy prohibition campaign of 1855; nor does his name appear in any newspaper notice or account of the numerous temperance meetings constantly held throughout those heated and clamorous months.[2]

Lincoln's sagacious policy during this political transition period, of saying nothing publicly about anything upon which the opponents of slavery extension were divided or uncertain, is illustrated by his long silence on three other matters of grave public concern which arose at that critical time. Two of them profoundly affected the thought and feeling of the whole country and did much to hasten the coming of civil war. Those two were the violence in Kansas and the assault on Sumner in the Senate Chamber. The third was the Know-Nothing riots of 1855.

On none of these subjects did Lincoln, then or ever afterward, write anything for publication over his own name. Nor did he

[1] For example, see editorials in issues of Feb. 26, 28, April 25, May 9, 10, 15, etc.; articles by a lawyer, signed 'XXX,' March 2, 5, 8, 12, 15, 17, 20; by 'Q,' March 13; by 'Prohibition,' March 19, 21, 24, 27, etc., 1855. Some of the editorials and articles were by Herndon.

The *Illinois Journal* also thrice published the law in full, March 13, May 10, and 26, 1855. And see a satirical piece on 'Protection from Fanatics' signed 'Pulltight, Hardscrabble, Sneekout & Co.,' June 2, 1855, probably by Herndon.

The *Journal's* position was against license in any case: 'Free liquor! or no liquor. . . . As for us, we are for PROHIBITION.' Editorial in issue of April 25, 1855.

'Let us take the *axe* and *maul* the Legislature has put in our hands, and go to work . . . until the fence is permanently secured around the whole field.' *Ib.*, March 24, 1855.

'The people will resist no law which is fairly enacted by the majority. . . . They will not overthrow order and law for a quart of whisky. . . . They cannot see self preservation in a tub of "rot-gut."' *Ib.*, Feb. 28, 1855.

[2] This campaign was unbelievably vituperative and very thorough. Koerner, I, 622–3. Yet a light vote was polled — 79,885 for and 89,915 against prohibition. *Illinois State Register*, June 20, 1855.

Sangamon County gave a majority of 604 against the new law. *Ib.*, June 9, 1855.

The biggest vote for the law was cast in counties where the New York *Tribune* had widest circulation and where Republicans and Abolitionists were most numerous. For full vote by counties see *Illinois State Register*, June 20, 1855.

make more than a casual reference to the turbulence in Kansas until the beating of the Massachusetts Senator and the increasing disturbances beyond the Missouri border had aroused the North and made possible the success of the Republican Party.

When, finally, at that decisive moment, Lincoln did speak out, and speak even with passion, he yet did not put on paper a word of the fiery denunciations he uttered. In the exercise of this self-restraint, he showed, as we shall presently see, the wisdom of the statesman as well as the astuteness of the politician. Then, too, almost up to the moment when, at last, he did announce himself, he was sadly confused on the political situation — a neutral condition which he frankly admitted, though privately, to the closest of his old-time friends.

The only public question about which Lincoln said anything at this particular time was slavery itself. Herndon tells of an illustrative incident. The son of a free negress, Polly, who lived in Springfield, went to New Orleans as a roustabout on a steamboat. He did not have 'free papers' and, as required by law, he was put in jail while the vessel was in port. When the steamboat was ready to leave the boy was overlooked and, in due time, he was advertised for sale to pay jail expenses. Polly appealed to Lincoln and Herndon and the partners applied to Governor Matteson to get her son released. The Governor could do nothing. With unwonted heat, Lincoln said:

'By God, Governor, I'll make the ground in this country too hot for the foot of a slave, whether you have the legal power to secure the release of this boy or not.' Finally Lincoln and Herndon raised, by subscription, enough money to pay the boy's prison charges, and so got him back to his mother.[1]

In general, however, so far as is known Lincoln said nothing publicly and little privately from the close of the campaign of 1854 to May 29, 1856, when, at last, he joined the Republican Party and made a speech of grandeur and power. Yet during those twenty months the North flamed with excitement which grew stronger and fiercer all the time.

This commotion was caused by what was said to be going on in Kansas; but while anti-slavery men raged and professional

[1] Herndon, II, 378–9.

agitators spoke in words of fire at innumerable meetings, great numbers of honest opponents of slavery extension were doubtful about the stories which came from that Territory.

Moreover, these cautious and conservative people were almost as much alarmed and repelled by the Northern extremists as they were by the evil tidings from the West. Yet, until this large and hesitant class were convinced and ready to help, no successful opposition to slavery extension could be made.

Thus an outline of the story of what happened in Kansas, and of what was alleged to have happened, is indispensable to the narrative of Lincoln's political career and of the sudden and unequalled growth of the Republican Party. Indeed, but for the Kansas agitation of 1854–56 and the Sumner-Brooks affair, the excitement over the repeal of the Missouri Compromise itself would have died; the Republican Party would have suffered the fate of its predecessors, the Liberty Party and the Free-Soil Party; and the door been closed to Lincoln's further political advancement in the direction it finally took.

We must now have in mind the facts related in Chapter III. The Kansas-Nebraska Act opened that territory to settlement by slave-holders as well as others, on equal terms. Even before that law was enacted, thousands of settlers from all over the country who had gathered along the border, began to move across the line and take up claims.[1] For the most part these were the people found in Kansas when the first census of that Territory was taken. This fact is important in the story that now unfolds.

In 1854, when the occupation of the two Territories could legally begin, the white population of the slave States was approximately seven million and that of the free States was over sixteen million.[2] The migration for long distances of the owners of many slaves was difficult and expensive. It meant the sale of plantations and similar arrangements of delay and inconvenience. Moreover, the abandonment of land and plants where slave labor was profitable for regions where gain was

[1] By the end of March, 1854, there were not enough Missouri River boats at St. Louis to take immigrants who were on their way to the Territories. They came in companies from Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. *Washington Union*, March 29, 1854.

[2] Average of census 1850 and 1860.

uncertain was not an attractive enterprise.[1] But the landless, the aspiring, the ambitious, the seekers for adventure, the searchers for new countries and wider opportunities, if unincumbered by slaves, could go anywhere with comparative ease. Millions of such people lived in the North and a lesser number in the South. So it had come about that the West and Northwest had been settled principally from the North and East. Amasa Walker advised Sumner that 'there will be an immense effort made to colonize the new territory with the friends of freedom,' if the Kansas-Nebraska bill should pass.[2]

During the debate in the Senate over the Kansas-Nebraska bill an energetic and resourceful member of the Massachusetts Legislature, Eli Thayer of Worcester, began to devise some practical and concrete plan to 'drive' slavery from Kansas. Presently he hit upon the idea of forming a business company to colonize that Territory with settlers from the free States and from abroad. So Thayer secured the grant of a charter of a corporation, the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society, with a capital of five million dollars, 'for the purpose of assisting emigrants to settle in the West.'

Thus Thayer's corporation was in existence on April 26, 1854, more than five weeks before the immigrants could legally enter the Territories. The promoter was thrifty as well as philanthropic. His plan was to secure Kansas as a free State by filling the Territory with anti-slavery emigrants, and then similarly to colonize Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Texas, thus steadily narrowing slave dominion;[3] and at the same time, by taking

[1] 'The Southern planter does not take his force of negroes to a disputed territory. . . . It did not once occur during the contest for the Territory of Kansas.' Eli Thayer's speech in House, Feb. 24, 1859, as quoted in *History of the Kansas Crusade:* Eli Thayer, 246–7.

'The men of the North have nothing to fear who go to Kansas as to a free land. The true men of the South will not long care to be going there with their perishable Slave property while such uncertainty still clouds the future of the State. . . . The South has not the men to spare, . . . while from the North the wave of emigration is always flowing westward. . . . Moreover, the tide of foreign emigration Kansasward is through *our* ports, and *this* is a free *tide.*' New York *Times* (editorial), April 3, 1856. Italics *Times'*.

[2] Walker to Sumner, Brookfield, Mass., April 25, 1854. Sumner MSS.

[3] *The New England Emigrant Aid Co.*: Thayer, 27–9. Thayer actually did begin this process in Virginia when the Kansas fight had been won. *Ib.*, 59, 268; also Thayer to *New York Herald*, clipped in *Liberator*, April 24, 1857. This invasion of Virginia was

up land adjacent to good town sites, by the rental of implements and mills to settlers, and by other forehanded schemes, to make the struggle for freedom a profitable enterprise.[1]

Cautious New England investors were wary of Thayer's grandiose scheme, however, and little stock was subscribed. So he and his fellow promoters formed a private concern under the title of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, and went ahead with their plans. None of these men were Abolitionists; they wanted rather to prevent the extension of slavery and then gradually choke it to death. Indeed Garrison, Phillips, and the thorough-going Abolitionists assailed Thayer's scheme because, among other things, it was to be carried out by force and would cause the shedding of blood.[2]

Let the Company's emigrants go to Kansas as the Pilgrims came to New England, adjured Sumner.[3] Greeley said that he

also to be thrifty. 'I assure you that it is our purpose to be strictly a business organization.'

Soon after its organization, the Emigrant Aid Company published a book *Kansas and Nebraska: An account of the Emigrant Aid Companies.* It was written by a young clergyman, Edward Everett Hale.

The volume contained an extensive and detailed description of Kansas, directions to emigrants, etc.; and, in view of what followed, made statements of vital importance. For example:

'Several thousand men of New England origin propose to emigrate this very summer [1854].' 225.

'Such a removal of an over-crowded population is one of the greatest advantages to eastern cities.' 226.

'Applications from German agents have already been made to members of the company.' 225.

'There needs no Peter the Hermit to enlist crusaders. The crusaders are already on their way.' 243.

'Every indication now points to victory. The movement of freemen is ten times as fast as is possible to men who must sell plantations before they move, and carry field hands before they can labor.' 246.

[1] The 'investment . . . promises large returns at no distant day. . . . The company . . . will possess several reservations of six hundred and forty acres each, on which its boarding-houses and mills stand. . . . These points will then be the large commercial positions of the new State.' Hale, 227.

The London *Times* printed a long letter from a citizen of Boston, which stated that the promoters of the Emigrant Aid project had 'more *purely business ends* in view' than the winning of Kansas for freedom. 'They anticipate . . . *that the philanthropic bread cast upon the waters will return in the shape of comfortable dividends.*' The writer gave specific examples of the profit-making features of the Emigrant Aid Company's project. London *Times*, clipped in *Washington Sentinel*, Dec. 23, 1854. Italics *Sentinel's*.

[2] *Emigrant Aid:* Thayer, 53. And see the *Liberator* from May, 1854, to 1857.

[3] Sumner to Thos. Drew, Chairman Mass. Committee, May 1, 1854. *Works*, III, 334–5.

would help arouse the North at once and the New York *Tribune* became a mighty propagandist of Thayer's scheme.[1] Whittier wrote a hymn, sung by the emigrants when starting from Boston, at stops along the way, and after they reached Kansas:

'We cross the prairie as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the Free!' [2]

Typical of other provocative verses, also sung by Emigrant Aid Company settlers and printed in the Company's Kansas newspaper, was

THE FREEMAN'S SONG

'Traitors shaped in Southern mould
Have our honest birthright sold;
Wolves are set to guard our fold;
Shame, Democracy!

From our mountains in the North
Freedom's legions sally forth,
Shouting o'er the trembling earth
Death to slavery!' [3]

News of the five million dollar Massachusetts corporation formed to colonize Kansas awakened excitement, anger, and alarm among the people of Western Missouri.[4] Counties along or near the border had large populations and many slaves; and it was feared and believed that the organized and, as they thought, heavily financed, effort to force free emigration into Kansas would result in systematic inducements to their slaves

[1] Thayer, 36–51; New York *Tribune*, May 29, 30, June 1, 1854.

[2] 'The Kansas Emigrants.' Whittier's *Poems*, III, 176–7. Also see Thayer, 165.

[3] Whittier's hymn and 'The Freeman's Song' were printed in the first number of the *Herald of Freedom*, the organ of the Emigrant Aid Co., published at Wakarusa (Lawrence), Kansas, Oct. 21, 1854, soon after the Company's first emigrants arrived.

Another stanza of Whittier's poem was:

'We go to rear a wall of men
On Freedom's southern line,
And plant beside the cotton-tree
The rugged Northern pine!'

[4] *Kansas:* Leverett W. Spring, 28. 'Powerful capitalized societies.' Channing states that the company never took in more than $140,000.

to escape, and in the final destruction of slavery in Missouri itself.

Worse still, it was thought that the thousands of blacks would be incited to rise against the whites, burning and slaying as Nat Turner and his maddened negroes had done in Virginia. Then came tidings that Free-Soil and Abolition members of Congress had organized another Emigrant Aid Society to accomplish the same purpose for which Thayer's Massachusetts Company had been formed.[1]

Heated editorials were published in the newspapers of western Missouri and irritated men in boisterous meetings passed wrathful resolutions. Millions were being spent, they said, to send to Kansas swarms from the slums of Eastern cities. European paupers were to be herded into the new Territory. The people of western Missouri welcomed honest immigrants, they declared, who came to Kansas to stay and make homes; but they resented this directed horde of paid 'nigger stealers' who were coming to 'abolitionize' Kansas, and, in the end, Missouri too.[2]

[1] Each member of the Congressional Emigrant Aid Society gave from fifty to a hundred dollars. It had a room and secretary in Washington and sent circulars all over the country. Testimony of Daniel Mace before Congressional Investigating Committee on the Troubles in Kansas, 829. This report will be quoted as *Howard Committee* in subsequent references.

[2] Westport Resolutions, June 3, and Independence Resolutions, June 5, 1854. *National Weekly Intelligencer*, June 24, 1854. Weston Resolutions, Aug. 20, 1854. *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 15, 1854.

At first the *Independence Messenger*, Whig, and the *Agrarian*, Democratic, both published at Independence, strongly condemned such resolutions. Weekly *National Intelligencer*, July 1, 1854; *St. Louis Intelligencer* quoted in *Illinois Journal*, Sept. 15, 1854. The bad feeling soon spread, however, and the expression of it grew more heated.

On Dec. 25, 1854, came the Lafayette Co. Resolutions: 'Societies were formed . . . [and] money contributed . . . for the purpose . . . of buying up, and sending to the territory of Kansas . . . a set of deluded, ignorant and vicious tools of knavish abolitionists. . . . Such as would be thus bought up . . . would be a wicked, debased and abandoned class, dragged forth from the dens of filth, vice, misery and crime of the Northern cities.' So pro-slavery emigrants must be protected against these incendiary hordes, etc. *Washington Sentinel*, Jan. 7, 1855.

On Jan. 1, 1855, the Ray County Resolutions were adopted: 'Emigrating aid-societies — rendered efficient and potent by money . . . [are] shipping to that Territory [Kansas] hundreds and thousands of mercenaries, picked up from the purlieus of Northern cities. . . . We regard the course . . . as a lawless crusade' and will resist it. *Washington Sentinel*, Jan. 18, 1855.

Similar resolutions were adopted at Douglas, Kansas, Jan. 22, 1855, but additional charges were made: 'We have the undoubted evidence before our eyes of the existence of a speculating company in Boston, Massachusetts, who entertain designs of vast schemes

They never heard of the collapse of the five million dollar corporation, and, if they had been told of its breakdown, they would not have believed it. Rumor swelled as it stalked through the border counties, just as we shall presently see it bloat when it parades through New England and the North.

Something more than talk was necessary to thwart the plans of the Emigrant Aid Companies, said the pro-slavery leaders of western Missouri. So secret societies were organized to 'counteract' the activities of those 'abolition' associations. Those societies were called 'The Blue Lodge,' 'The Social Band,' 'The Sons of the South.' [1] Exaggerated and terrible descriptions of such organizations were circulated throughout the North, almost as soon as they were formed.[2]

Chief among the promoters of these societies and the most active and blatant of the pro-slavery leaders were Senator Atchison and Benjamin Franklin Stringfellow.[3] They were as fanati-

of speculation in lands, towns, and mines, and to obtain possession of the fairest and most valuable portions of Kansas Territory,' etc. *Herald of Freedom*, Feb. 17, 1855.

For such utterances free State emigrants expressed contempt: 'A barking dog never bites. . . . They [Missourians] can't muster up enough of slaveholders to make a colony. They are very mad at Massachusetts for donating five million dollars to send people that are not able to move here, and fill up this Territory with voters, who will bring it in free. They say that they had better liberate their slaves at once than to have them run off by the Canada underground railroad. . . . But what can they do?' Letter of John Chrisman, free State Kansas settler, June 4, 1854, in *Goshen* (Ind.) *Democrat*, copied in New York *Tribune*, July 6, 1854, describing Weston meeting, which Chrisman attended.

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 283. *Howard Committee*, 3; Testimony of E. C. McCarty, 855–6; of Leander Ker, Chaplain U.S. Military Post, Ft. Leavenworth since 1842, 859, *et al.*

The testimony before the Congressional Investigating Committee is overwhelming that almost all Missourians and a large number of settlers believed that the whole trouble came from the Emigrant Aid Company's plans and operations. Some of these witnesses were from the free States. See, for example, *Howard Committee*, 1175, 1180, 1182, *et seq.*

[2] New York *Tribune*, June 29, 1854.

[3] Stringfellow was a young lawyer of Weston, Mo. In 1854 he was about thirty-eight years old, a natural leader and well liked. Even the *Herald of Freedom*, which denounced him with utmost virulence during the Kansas struggle, paid him this tribute when it was nearly over:

'He is quite popular with his friends. In the Southern acceptation of the word, he is much of a gentleman, affable and generous,' etc. *Herald of Freedom*, Nov. 22, 1856. And see *Annals of Platte County:* W. M. Paxton, 943.

Late in 1854, Stringfellow wrote a pamphlet entitled, *Negro-Slavery, No Evil;* or *The North and the South: A Report made to the Platte County Self-Defensive Association.*

The Emigrant Aid Societies had been organized by Abolitionists, said Stringfellow, 'to throw into Kansas a horde who shall not only exclude slaveholders from that territory, but in the end abolish slavery in Missouri. . . . We find these miscalled emigrants

cal for slavery as the wildest Abolitionist was for emancipation. During the turbulent months before us, the truculent words even more than the imprudent actions of these two men were used with crushing effect against them and the cause they so fiercely championed.

On Friday, July 28, 1854, the first company sent out by Thayer arrived in Missouri and made their way to Kansas. Nearly all were young men. No disturbance took place; but some of the emigrants said savage things about slavery. This had a bad effect on the slave-holding communities of the border.[1] The second Emigrant Aid contingent of two hundred left Boston toward the end of August. It was joined at Albany by a hundred more, and the number was increased at every station along the way. A third company started in September.[2] Many of these Emigrant Aid Company men took Sharp's rifles with them.[3]

Other Aid Companies sprang up in the free States, and by the fall of 1854 larger numbers of eastern and northern emi-

really negro-thieves. . . . They are not freemen, but paupers, who have sold themselves to Ely Thayer & Co.'

They said boldly what they would do. One 'emigrant' declared on the streets of Weston, that he 'would *willingly help burn the d—d slaveholding town.*' Many free negroes appeared and then several runaway slaves — 'our very lives were endangered.' Arson and murder were threatened. So, said Stringfellow, came the Self Defensive Association.

'Ours [the border], now the most prosperous portion of our State, will in a short time become a desert waste.' The plan was to 'abolitionize' Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, etc.

'We respect honest home seekers, even though their opinions, disagreeing with ours, end in our ruin;' but Thayer's slaves who come to steal our property and drive us from our homes must be dealt with by the strong hand, just as Indian cattle thieves were treated, etc.

Stringfellow's tract was reprinted by the N.E. Emigrant Aid Co., Boston, 1855.

[1] Missouri Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, Aug. 6, in issue of Aug. 12, 1854. After giving his story, the correspondent volunteered advice to emigrants from the North:

'By all means, forbear uttering hot and angry words. They effect no good whatever, but tend only to exasperate the feelings of the slaveholder and southern men generally. It is my earnest conviction, that a large majority of the people of Missouri are not only willing but eager that Kansas shall be secured to Freedom. But if they once get the idea that organizations are formed in the East for the purpose of interfering with what they call their legal rights in the State of Missouri, such an intense degree of excitement will be raised as must necessarily defeat or postpone indefinitely, the accomplishment of our objects.'

[2] New York *Tribune*, Aug. 31, 1854; Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Sept. 2, 1854.

[3] 'As for "Sharp's rifles," I know many went along with the emigrants. . . . No organization *openly* provided such implements at first, but they generally formed a part of

grants were going to Kansas or were on their way.[1] Letters sent home brought companies of 'young and spirited men' from the North to join their comrades in the land of conflict and promise.[2] Sympathetic newspapers were full of accounts of these pilgrimages to carry out Thayer's 'plan of freedom.'[3] Tremendous crowds greeted the emigrants all along the route.[4]

Others, also from the North, were entering the Territory or preparing to go there; but these were ordinary settlers such as had peopled the West and Northwest, and were not controlled by the Emigrant Aid Associations. Large numbers were from Illinois.[5] In fact the great bulk of all emigrants to Kansas were from States west of New England and New York.[6] Many went to Nebraska. Aside from those sent by the Emigrant Aid Company, not all Northern settlers were against slavery,[7] and none of them took arms.

Many also went from Missouri, Arkansas, and Kentucky. Not all of the Southern emigrants were for slavery and few of them carried weapons for warfare. For several months they outnumbered those from the North; but in October, 1854, the

the equipment of our colonies. The directors furnished them on their individual responsibility.' *Emigrant Aid:* Thayer, 45.

[1] Correspondence *Boston Post,* Aug. 16, clipped in *National Intelligencer,* Sept. 2, 1854. 'Our young Territory is filling up with a rapidity unparalleled except in the case of California.' *Kansas Herald,* clipped in *Washington Union,* Oct. 25, 1854.

[2] Thayer, 168–70, 180–1. [3] *Ib.,* 171–8. [4] *Ib.,* 184.

[5] *Urbana Union,* March 23, June 8; *St. Clair Weekly Tribune,* April 22, Oct. 14; *Belleville Advocate,* May 10; *Alton Weekly Courier,* Oct. 5, 1854.

[6] 'There are more men from Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana than from all New England and New York combined.' Lane in Chicago speech, May 30, 1856. *Kansas and the Kansans:* William E. Connelley, II, 597.

Unless specifically indicated, the account of the Kansas struggle hereafter given in the text, including references to letters, documents, speeches, newspapers, descriptions of men and towns, are from Mr. Connelley's book; the official report of the testimony taken by the Howard Committee (H. R., 34th Cong. 1st Sess., No. 200); *Journals of Council and House of the Kansas Legislature,* 1855; the *Congressional Globe; Annals of Kansas:* D. W. Wilder (new ed. 1886); the *Kansas Historical Collections* and the *Publications of the Kansas Historical Society,* especially the articles by Mr. Connelley in those series of volumes; the *Herald of Freedom; Kansas Free State;* New York *Tribune;* New York *Times; New York Herald,* for period under review.

Nearly all histories of Kansas and Missouri, and of the counties involved, written as late as a generation after the Civil War, are wholly one-sided and anything in them, except official records, must be used with extreme caution.

[7] *Illinois Journal,* April 13, 1854; *St. Clair Weekly Tribune,* June 3, 1854, etc.

tide began to turn.[1] Even in mid-summer of 1854 the correspondent of the *New York Evening Post* reported to his paper that many Missouri emigrants to Kansas were opposed to slavery and that the Territory was sure to become a free State.[2] While some slave-holders took up claims, no slaves had been carried to Kansas by the beginning of winter.[3]

At the head of Thayer's first party was Charles Robinson, the principal agent in Kansas of the New England Emigrant Aid Company. He was a big man, with large bewhiskered face, bald head, and cold, steady gray eyes. It would have been hard to find an abler manager for such an enterprise. He was prudent, daring, and resourceful; and he was experienced in frontier life. He had been one of the gold-seekers in California and had taken part in the turbulence that preceded the organization of that State. He was in Kansas to make money for himself as well as to make the Territory a free State.[4]

Robinson led his colonists to a place on the prairies near the Wakarusa River, some forty miles from the Missouri line. Immediately the New England men got into a quarrel with the settlers who were already on the ground which Robinson chose for a town site.[5] But the trouble was finally settled by buying the squatters' claims, and a town was founded, named Lawrence, in honor of the principal financial backer of the Emigrant Aid Company, Amos A. Lawrence of Boston.[6] Throughout the period of this narrative, its houses were little better than shanties of sod, grass, and clapboards, together with some

[1] *Washington Star*, clipped in New York *Tribune*, Oct. 5, 1854.

[2] *Indiana Sentinel*, July 25, 1854. 'The people of Missouri . . . received him everywhere cordially, and treated his opinions with the greatest respect.'

[3] *Washington Star*, in New York *Tribune*, Oct. 5, 1854.

[4] For description of Robinson as he appeared at this time see *Beyond the Mississippi:* Albert D. Richardson (1867), 44. An extremely laudatory account of him is the *Life of Charles Robinson:* Frank W. Blackmar.

'He accumulated a fortune, becoming the most wealthy citizen of the State in his time.' *Kansas:* Connelley, 1, 430. And see *An Appeal to the Record:* Connelley, 23–4, 53.

[5] Letter from Fort Leavenworth, Oct. 11, 1854, in *Boston Post*, clipped in Weekly *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 4, 1854.

'Both parties are represented as preparing for hostilities.' Letter from a New England Settler, Lawrence, Oct. 4, 1854, in *Milwaukee Sentinel*, as quoted in *Washington Sentinel*, Oct. 27, 1854.

[6] *Life of Amos A. Lawrence:* William Lawrence, 83–4.

tents, so scattered that it was hard to tell the 'miry' streets; and its chief business was horse trading and land speculation.[1] Robinson promptly engaged in the latter, bought lots in town prospects, and laid out a town of his own.[2]

During all this time Kansas was without any government whatever. No one knew even how many settlers had gone into the Territory, or where they came from. In Nebraska, on the other hand, a census had been taken promptly and a legislature had been elected, and this body was actually in session more than a month before the inhabitants of Kansas were enumerated.[3]

The cause of this difference in the administration of the two Territories was the curious and, to this day, unexplained delays of the Governor of Kansas, Andrew H. Reeder of Pennsylvania. He was a good lawyer, forty-five years old, fat, gray-haired, with large prominent blue eyes and ministerial whiskers. He had been appointed by President Pierce in June, 1854, at about the same time that a Governor for Nebraska had been named; but Reeder did not go to his post for more than three months afterward.

When, finally, on October 7, 1854, he did reach Kansas, immigrants from the North were coming in rapidly. Pro-slavery

[1] 'Recollections of Early Days in Kansas:' Shalor Winchell Eldridge, *Pubs. Kansas Hist. Socy.*, II, 17 (1920); Richardson, 37–8.

Some emigrants were disappointed and became bitter toward the Aid Companies. J. H. Howe, leader of a company from Cleveland, said publicly, that those organizations 'have encouraged hundreds of poor well-meaning and honest people to leave their homes and rush into the Territory without means to sustain themselves there, who must suffer everything but death, and many of them that, if they remain.' As quoted in the *Herald of Freedom* of Lawrence, clipped in *Washington Sentinel*, Jan. 16, 1855.

And see, especially, the testimony of John E. Ingalls, in *Howard Committee*, 841–4. Ingalls lived near Boston and went to Kansas with a party sent by the Emigrant Aid Co.

[2] The town of Quindaro, named after Quindaro Guthrie, wife of Abelard Guthrie. Richardson, 29–31. In 1856 Richardson found lots in this place selling at $1,500 each; and lots in Lawrence as high as $2,000 each.

[3] 'Things are moving off lively in our sister Territory. The governor . . . drives matters forward. . . . The districting of the Territory has been accomplished, and already men are abroad in each taking the enumeration. So soon as this is completed the apportionment will be made, and elections for members of the assembly and delegates to Congress will be ordered. . . . Charming Nebraska! Homer nor Milton ever saw thy beautiful landscapes.' *Council Bluffs City Bugle*, clipped in *Washington Union*, Nov. 15, 1854.

The Nebraska elections were held Nov. 29, 1854, and the Legislature convened Jan. 16, 1855.

men urged him to take a census and order elections. The Governor refused. He must make a 'tour of inspection,' he said.

While on this journey Reeder bought lots in several towns [1] and purchased much land adjacent to the likeliest of them. With associates the Governor also started a town of his own, which he called Pawnee City. Reeder's financial plans were ambitious. Pawnee was near the junction of streams which formed the Kansas River; he counted on running steamboats to his town, and he put money into two such craft that made trips to Lawrence.[2] Unluckily for him, the Governor's town-site was on a military reservation, not yet open to exploitation. His fellow promoter, Col. Montgomery, in command of the post, Fort Riley, was court-martialed and dismissed from the Army, as soon as the Government learned of his part in the scheme.[3] Upon Reeder's town of Pawnee the fate of Kansas, the fortunes of the Republican Party, and the career of Lincoln, presently turned.

As we swiftly review the main events that now took place in the Territory, we must have in mind the vital fact that Lincoln had personal reports from a man on the ground. Among the broken-down politicians, unsuccessful lawyers, and failures in business who, from South and North alike, went to the new Territories for 'another chance,' was a dissolute Illinois attorney, Mark W. Delahay. He was then twenty-seven years of age and had married a fifth cousin of Lincoln's mother. When in court at Petersburg, Lincoln had been wont to associate with Delahay, just as he had prized the company of Jack Kelso in New Salem.

In the spring of 1855 Delahay bought a pro-slavery paper, the *Kansas Herald*, published at Leavenworth, and changed its name to *Territorial Register*.[4] It took the side of the ordinary settler, and earnestly advocated the Free State cause. Delahay

[1] Leavenworth, Lawrence, Tecumseh, Topeka, etc. They cost Reeder little or nothing because he was Governor. *Kansas:* Connelley, I, 411.

[2] *History of Jackson Co., Mo.*, Union Historical Co. (Kansas City, 1881), 425–6.

[3] President Pierce's Special Message, Jan. 24, 1856. *Messages:* Richardson, V, 352–60. The defence of Reeder was that, while Pawnee was adjacent to Fort Riley, it was not actually on the Reservation; and that Davis, then Secretary of War, extended the military tract over the site of Pawnee after that town project had been started. These assertions were wholly false.

[4] Paxton, 190; Wilder, 65; *Galena Courier*, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 20, 1856 It does not appear where Delahay got the money to buy and run the *Register*.

kept Lincoln informed of developments in Kansas, and, of course, sent him copies of the *Register*.[1] These facts may explain Lincoln's long silence on the controversy we are now to witness, and his deep and lasting dislike of Reeder.

Without taking a census the Governor ordered the election of a Delegate to Congress. It was held on November 29, 1854, when winter had opened. Atchison urged Missourians to thwart the designs of the Emigrant Aid Company by going to the ballot-box in Kansas.[2] Stringfellow incited the Missouri border counties to save the day, even by the shedding of blood if need be.[3] Several hundred young men, mostly armed, crossed the border and voted illegally for the pro-slavery candidate, John W. Whitfield, the Government Indian Agent. He would have been elected without them — for a majority of the legal voters were still pro-slavery — and in spite of fraud on the Free State side, or, at least, attempted fraud.[4]

Even on this first trial of strength at the ballot-box, the Emigrant Aid Company's colony at Lawrence was not caught napping. Wilson declared in the Senate that when the Missourians came to that stronghold, they found Robinson, 'the Miles Standish of Kansas,' and his men, 'ready to meet the issue with powder and ball.' [5]

[1] Whitney, 375. The Delahays migrated to Kansas when it was first open to settlement. 'Mark was distressingly impecunious and awfully bibulous: and when the Kansas struggle was on, he was in communication with his distinguished connection about politics out there.' See also Weik, 221–7.

[2] 'If a set of fanatics and demagogues a thousand miles off could afford to advance their money . . . to abolitionize [Kansas] . . . what is your duty? When you reside in one day's journey of the territory, and when your peace, your quiet, and your property depend upon your action, you can without an exertion send five hundred of your young men who will vote in favor of your institution. Should each county in the State of Missouri only do its duty, the question will be decided quietly and peaceably.' *Illinois Journal*, Dec. 4, 1854.

[3] Wilson in *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 91.

[4] Spring, 40–1. The *Washington Sentinel*, Dec. 17, 1854, said that, even if the Missourians did vote, 'they had just as much right to exercise suffrage as did the paid emissaries of the miserable Abolition "Emigrant Societies" of the North.'

'The votes of those sent out by the Emigrant Aid Societies . . . were nearly all given in one district [which included the town of Lawrence] . . . 150 left on the day following the election, having complied with their contract in voting!' Stringfellow to Southern Congressmen in *ib.*, Jan. 12, 1855.

[5] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 90, Feb. 18, 1856.

Writing from Kansas, Dec. 2, 1854, a correspondent of the *Washington Union* said that Whig and abolition papers would print 'the most exaggerated stories and fabrica-

But the news went out that the 'Slave Power' had struck its first blow in the conquest of Kansas. The *Illinois Journal* reprinted from the *St. Louis Democrat* a letter stating that five hundred men had gone from the border Missouri counties 'determined to vote if it had to be done at the point of the bowie knife.'[1] In the New York *Tribune* Greeley urged resistance.[2] Other anti-slavery papers followed his lead. Stringfellow's 'blood' speech was reprinted throughout the North.[3] The Free State men of Kansas acted quickly. A secret military organization, the Kansas Legion, was formed.[4]

The Democratic press laid the whole blame on the Emigrant Aid Company and similar organizations. 'We believe the insane boastings of the "Emigrant Societies," and other kindred bodies of men, did much towards electing the Democratic delegate in Kansas, by such an overwhelming majority,' declared the *Rochester* (N.Y.) *Advertiser*.[5]

Then over the plains swept the winter of 1854–55. Many emigrants who had staked out claims, went back home until spring. Practically all from Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas returned to their comfortable houses for the months of cold and blizzard.[6]

Toward the end of winter the Governor ordered the taking of a census. It was a strange time for such work. Two feet of snow covered the ground. The enumeration showed only a little more than eight thousand inhabitants, and a majority of some hundreds were from the South. Most of these settlers were the emigrants who had gathered on the border in anticipa-

tions. . . . General Whitfield was fairly, honestly, and honorably elected by the squatters of the Territory.' It had been a hot campaign and the 'friends of the administration had won.' *Washington Union*, Dec. 15, 1854.

[1] *Illinois Journal*, Dec. 15, 1854.

[2] New York *Tribune*, Dec. 7, 1854.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 91.

[4] Testimony Dr. John P. Wood in *Howard Committee*, 658. Also Senate Committee Report No. 34, March 12, 1856.

[5] Clipped in *Washington Sentinel*, Dec. 13, 1854.

[6] Testimony Dr. John H. Stringfellow, in *Howard Committee*, 353. Also statements of Senator George W. Jones of Iowa, *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 409, April 16, 1856; and of Douglas, *ib.*, 361. 'A large majority of the emigrants . . . returned to their old homes . . . with the view of going back to Kansas in the Spring with their families. . . . These facts are well known to the Senators from the Western States.'

tion of the opening of the Territories. A much smaller number were those sent out by the Emigrant Aid Company, but these formed the nucleus for all Free State men in Kansas.

As spring opened the tide of migration from the North once more began to flow. Then, at last, Reeder ordered the election of a legislature, to be held March 30, 1855, more than two months after the Legislature of Nebraska had convened and four months after it had been elected. Pro-slavery men, especially those in western Missouri, said that the date of the election was known in Boston and Pennsylvania, long before the Governor announced it in Kansas.[1] Reeder stoutly denied that he had given such information or that anybody could have done so.[2]

But the suspicion first aroused in the Missouri border counties by news of the five million dollar Massachusetts corporation was strengthened. The belief became general that Reeder was carrying into execution in Kansas a conspiracy formed in New England. So Atchison implored his Missouri constituents to 'beat the Yankees at their own game,' Stringfellow talked ferociously, and the Blue Lodges held dark and fearful sessions. Whether the scared and angry border had learned of the Kansas Legion, is not known; but the pro-slavery leaders took no chances. Moreover, they honestly and very fervently believed that many 'emigrants' had recently gone into Kansas merely to vote and then return East.[3]

[1] Testimony of M. P. Rively, *Howard Committee*, 384–6; Charles E. Kearney, merchant of Westport, Mo., who heard in Boston, Feb. 21, of date of election, 852–4; William H. Miller, Parkville, Mo., 863; F. M. Mahan, Clerk on steamboat between St. Louis and St. Joseph, 867–70, *et al.* Also William G. Mathias in debate in Kansas Legislature, July 23, 1855. Kansas Correspondence, New York *Times*, July 24, in issue Aug. 4, 1855.

[2] Testimony of Reeder. *Howard Committee*, 934–5.

[3] Testimony of William T. Donaldson, *ib.*, 851–2. This witness, a livery man of Westport, swore that he took several wagon loads of men from the river landing into Kansas and brought most of them back after the election.

E. W. Donaldson. *Ib.*, 854; Isaac M. Ridge of Kansas City, 861–2; Alexander Gilham, merchant, Westport, 848–51; J. B. Evans, 846; J. Riddlesbarger, 844–6; Henry M. Blossom, Clerk on Steamboat *Polar Star*, 838–40; W. H. Chick, Kansas City Commission Merchant, 835–6.

This charge was made as to the first election, Nov. 29, 1854; 'The fact of [that] hundreds of the hirelings of the Abolition "Emigrant Aid Society" have left Kansas . . . since the recent election . . . proves conclusively that the only purpose for which they were sent, was to control the election in that territory.' Lafayette Co. Resolutions, Dec. 25, 1854. *Washington Sentinel*, Jan. 7, 1855.

Thus it happened that, when election day came March 30, 1855, the Kansas sun rose on an army with banners. More than five thousand Missourians had crossed the border to vote for pro-slavery members of the Legislature. All were armed. Some carried muskets and other weapons taken from the United States Arsenal at Liberty, Missouri. They had cannon, too, and the military aspect of the invasion was heightened by flags, fifes, drums, and a band or two. Also a good deal of whisky was an attractive part of the commissariat and kept up martial spirits.[1]

In such fashion a heavy pro-slavery vote was piled up. In some cases the Missouri cohorts went to the absurd extreme of electing members who lived in that State. Their work done, the array marched back in hilarious triumph. With bands playing and drums rolling, they paraded about the public square at Independence, Missouri, cheered by admiring women and men who lined the streets.[2] The *Squatter Sovereign*, a paper which Stringfellow had newly established to champion slavery in Kansas, was frantic with joy.[3]

Yet it is doubtful if, at that particular time, a single Missouri vote was needed to carry the election. Notwithstanding that fraudulent voting was probably done by Free State immigrants as well as by the invaders, the genuine settlers of pro-slavery views, were, probably, still in the majority.

Tidings of the picturesque outrage fairly set the telegraph wires on fire. Mails were burdened with lurid descriptions of this armed and drunken assault from Missouri on the ballot-box in Kansas. The real facts were bad enough; but, by repetition and distance, accounts of them grew into grotesque legends. The anti-slavery press exhausted the vocabulary of horror. The New York *Tribune* led the onslaught. Greeley invented the term 'Border Ruffians,' and those burning words were attached to all who lived in western Missouri.[4] Henceforth they were

[1] Correspondence New York *Tribune* from St. Louis, April 10, in issue of April 17, 1855.

[2] *St. Louis Republican*, clipped in New York *Tribune*, April 9, 1855.

[3] The first issue of the *Squatter Sovereign* appeared immediately after the taking of the census in Feb., 1855. Paxton, 197. Also New York *Tribune*, April 6, 1855.

[4] New York *Tribune*, April 10, 12, 1855. The Missourians were enraged by Greeley's

represented as savage, ignorant, brutal creatures, with long unkempt hair, unshaven faces and ferocious bearing, roughly clad, with battered hats, frowsy shirts, bowie knives sticking out of boot-tops, revolvers thrust in belts, rifles held menacingly. Northern emigrants were pictured as well attired, unarmed, intelligent men, of orderly deportment, grave but kindly countenance, industrious, sober, religious, law-abiding. As a matter of fact, the costume, manners, and speech of the frontier were much the same. Living in sod huts, log cabins, or, now and then, a rude stone dwelling, and undergoing that toil, discomfort, and hardship inseparable from the settlement of unbroken plains, the emigrant from Massachusetts, Illinois, or Pennsylvania, soon looked like other settlers.

Since the incursions of the Border Ruffians were chiefly from the western counties of Missouri, it becomes necessary to examine briefly the kind of people who lived there; for the struggle for Kansas now developed into a contest between these counties, on the one hand, and anti-slavery people of the whole North from Maine to Minnesota, backed by a strong sentiment in Missouri itself, on the other. Atchison and Stringfellow made frantic appeals to the South for help.[1] That section was thor-

phrase 'Border Ruffians.' *St. Louis Republican* in New York *Tribune*, July 12, 1855.

'Those slave-breeders and slave-drivers mean to carry Kansas at the point of the bowie knife and the muzzle of the revolver.' New York *Tribune*, April 13, 1855.

'The rabble sent to overpower the actual voters of the Territory, were of the lowest grade of whites that can be found in a slave country, . . . the most degraded class of mortals.' *Ib.*, April 17, 1855. Also St. Louis dispatch, April 10, in same issue.

'The Missouri bullies. . . . Slavery is to be extended indefinitely over this Continent.' *Ib.*, April 27, 1855. The issue of July 13, 1855, was full of tales of Kansas outrages.

See also *Illinois Journal*, May 8, 1855. Country papers printed columns in a single issue. For instance, *Alton Weekly Courier*, May 10, 1855, had three columns.

A fair example of descriptions of the people of western Missouri published in many Northern papers and believed by most Northern men, women, and children, is this:

'In no other civilized land can there be found so obscene, depraved, brutish a race of beings, as inhabit the border counties of Missouri. A visit to their border towns is indeed sickening. Bar-rooms, saloons, and grog-shops are always filled with a drinking, gambling, swearing, fighting, blaspheming gang of loafers . . . who talk . . . mostly of killing Abolitionists in Kansas, ravishing the women, and carrying to their bestial dens the young and beautiful.' Kansas Correspondence in New York *Times*, Feb. 9, in issue of Feb. 25, 1856.

[1] 'Inasmuch as those laws [of migration] have been violated . . . by the force of money, and a powerful organization in the North and East, it becomes the South "to be up and doing," and to send in a population to counteract the North. . . . Thus far a few counties

oughly canvassed, many meetings were held, fiery speeches were made, inflammatory resolutions adopted. But the South, as a whole, remained indifferent, an attitude that caused the *Charleston Mercury* and three or four other organs of 'Southern rights' to foam with despair and wrath.[1]

In 1855 the communities of western Missouri were duplicates of that in which Lincoln was born and spent his early childhood in Hardin County, Kentucky. Excepting only the element of slavery, they were identical, too, with those among which Lincoln lived while in Indiana and after he came to Illinois.[2] The

in Western Missouri have successfully encountered and defeated this powerful organization.' Atchison to *Atlanta* (Ga.) *Examiner*, clipped in New York *Tribune*, Jan. 19, 1856.

'I was somewhat alarmed, when I saw our Southern friends seemingly ready to surrender it [Kansas], deterred by the declaration of those on whom they were accustomed to rely, that "it was not adapted to slave labor," while, at the same time, Abolitionists were organizing their companies, with millions of capital, to colonize that Territory. . . . Were they to succeed, it needs no prophet to foretell the speedy dissolution of the Union. Missourians have thus felt, that . . . they are not only defending their own homes, but the Union itself. To protect their homes, they have made their homes in Kansas. . . . While the people of Missouri are not "lawless invaders," many have moved into Kansas mainly induced by a determination to adopt all lawful means to protect themselves from the invasion of Abolitionists.'

'*Will Kansas be a Slaveholding State?* I answer without hesitation, it will.' Stringfellow to Southern Congressman, *Washington Sentinel*, Jan. 12, 1855. Italics Stringfellow's.

[1] 'Looking to the past and the present, many a brave heart might despair of the South. . . . Is she dead.' *Charleston Mercury*, as quoted in *Washington Sentinel*, Oct. 6, 1854.

'The "Decree of Omnipotent Slave power that Kansas should be a slave state" is the fiction, a morbid fancy; not in harmony but in conflict with the political records of that time. . . . There is no evidence that the controlling element of the South had any organized purpose or even expectancy of taking possession of Kansas.' *Foot Notes on Kansas History:* R. G. Elliott, 3, 7.

Channing in his *History* gives a summary of the efforts made in the South to send money and men to help pro-slavery men in Kansas. VI, 164–6.

Journals of the Legislatures of Southern States and laws passed by them do not show that any funds were appropriated, and private contributions were trivial compared to the sums raised in the North.

[2] The Missouri counties from which nearly all the Border Ruffians came were Jackson, Lafayette, Clay, Buchanan, Platte, Ray, and Saline. In 1850 these counties had a population of 68,586 whites, 18,259 slaves and 213 free negroes.

There were 225 public schools, 229 teachers; 14,217 pupils, as returned by families, went to school during the year and 6,903 attended steadily; while twenty-nine academies and other like institutions had forty-one teachers and 1,182 students. All Missouri witnesses before the Congressional Investigating Committee signed their names.

The foreign born population was negligible. Almost every family lived in a house of its own. *Census*, 1850.

Even better than the Census, as showing the kind of people living in the leading border counties, is *Annals of Platte Co., Mo.*, W. M. Paxton. Other 'histories' of these

worst of the Border Ruffians were about like the Clary Grove boys; and the best (for judges, ministers, teachers, and lawyers took part in the invasion) were similar to the better elements of New Salem, Springfield, and other towns and counties among which Lincoln lived up to the time of the Kansas struggle. These Missouri people were the same who had driven the Mormons from their State, just as had been done in Illinois.[1]

There was earnest Free-Soil sentiment in the border counties, but the pro-slavery men were now dominant and well-nigh crazed with anger and fear. Their violence and fraud, especially at the election of March 30, were denounced by the *Industrial Luminary*, published at Parkville, Platte County, Missouri. The press of that paper was, therefore, seized, broken, and thrown into the River. 'This outrage brought a myriad of anti-slavery voters to Kansas.' The publisher sued the leaders of the mob for destroying his property, recovered twenty-five hundred dollars damages, went to Illinois, and became wealthy.[2]

Immediately after the election, Robinson took militant action. The Free State Hotel, then building for the Emigrant Aid Company, was made into a fortress. It had thick walls, loop holes, flat roof and parapet with concealed embrasures for cannon.[3] George W. Deitzler was sent East for more Sharp's rifles.[4] They were promptly supplied and additional quantities were forwarded as the struggle developed.

The rifles were shipped in boxes and barrels marked 'Crockery,' 'Books,' 'Revised Statutes,' 'Hardware,' 'Boxes of Primers,' 'Bibles.'[5] How many were furnished during the period

counties, written after the War, either suppress reference to the border troubles or make hasty note of them with almost pathetic partisanship or fear.

[1] Channing, VI, 168. Thousands of Mormons were on their way to Utah at the time of the first excitement in Missouri over the Emigrant Aid Co.'s plans:

'It is estimated that 6,000 emigrants, with about 3,000 wagons and 30,000 head of stock will start from this place the present season for the Great Salt Lake Valley.' Letter from Atchison, Kan., June 19, in New York *Tribune*, July 4, 1855.

[2] Paxton, 198–9.

[3] *Life of James H. Lane:* John Speer, 22–3. The hotel was fifty by eighty feet, basement walls two feet thick, first story twenty inches and remainder eighteen inches, parapet around roof two feet thick and two high, port holes six feet apart, 'mortared over to prevent observation from without.' B. Johnson [builder of hotel] to Speer, Oct. 21, 1894.

[4] *Ib.*, 23; Spring, 60–1.

[5] Lawrence, 97–8. Also testimony of Dr. John P. Wood, before Howard Committee,

under review is not known. Amos A. Lawrence testifies that he sent a hundred in a single shipment.[1] The weapons were not provided by the Emigrant Aid Company as such; they were given by the members and by others, as private persons.[2]

When Reeder announced that he was ready to canvass the returns of the election, delegations from both sides, heavily armed, went to Shawnee Mission, where the Governor had his official residence, made protests, charges, threats, and, in general, stormed at each other. But, after full consideration, Reeder issued certificates of election to nearly all the newly chosen members; he refused such authentication to only eight of them and ordered a new election to fill their places. Although pro-slavery men ignored this election, three of those rejected by the Governor were again chosen. Thus all but five of the whole body were certified by the Governor as having been duly elected.

So came into existence the celebrated 'bogus' Legislature of Kansas, which, even long before it assembled, the anti-administration press and speakers outlawed.[3] 'We repudiate

659. 'They wanted to put them in my warehouse.' Samuel F. M. Salters, 1157, 'I saw them opened.' John M. Smith, 1169, *et al.*

[1] Lawrence, 96–8.

[2] 'Mr. Lawrence and others of the Company provided a large quantity of arms and ammunition and sent them to Kansas in 1855. I myself bought two cases of rifles . . . in the spring of 1855. . . . Dr. Robinson's firm and decided policy and the fact that the settlers were well armed with *Sharpes rifles* and ready to use them, caused the retreat of the Missourians from Lawrence. During the Kansas troubles . . . I expended of my own money, $4,500 for the purchase of rifles and cannon.' Thayer, 45–6.

'The *Philadelphia Ledger* states that Theodore Parker told them in his anti-slavery address in that city, last week, two-hundred of Sharp's rifles had been sent from Boston in boxes labelled "books." . . . All the statements about preparations for defense . . . have been furnished by the enemies of freedom. . . . Will not our New England friends take the hint . . . and send on a few hundred Sharp's rifles, and while about it suppose they add a thousand or so of that excellent treatise known as "Colt's home argument against oppression?" . . . Ten balls to each [rifle] per minute would be equal to 600 per hour. . . . If Missouri has a desire to march upon Lawrence . . . with such a shower of one ounce balls flying in their face, each ball, too, capable of being sent with precision on its mission of death, three miles, then the people of that State possess more courage than we have given them credit for.' *Herald of Freedom*, June 16, 1855.

And see 'The Sharp's Rifle Episode in Kansas History:' W. H. Isely. *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XII, 546–66. This paper deals chiefly with the activities of the Directors and agents of the Emigrant Aid Co.

[3] 'No more respect will be due [its acts and authority] . . . than a Legislature chosen by a tribe of wandering Arabs . . . on the prairies of that Territory.' New York *Tribune*, April 17, 1855.

and despise them and their authority,' exclaimed the *Herald of Freedom* in an editorial entitled 'MEETING OF THE MISSOURI-KANSAS LEGISLATURE,' almost a month before the lawmakers assembled.[1]

Reeder did not convene the Legislature for almost three months after he had approved the election of an overwhelming majority of it. When he did call it together, he directed it to meet at his town of Pawnee, which thus became the temporary capital of the Territory.[2] The members protested bitterly: Pawnee was a hundred and forty miles in the interior, they said, hard and expensive to reach and without accommodations, a mere town-site prospect, in fact.[3]

The Governor would not yield and the Legislature went with him to Pawnee and organized July 2, 1855. Reeder sent to the two Houses his official Message. It was long, pompous, turgid. Few new laws were needed, he said, since those in existence by virtue of Treaties and Acts of Congress were sufficient for most purposes; the Legislature could do as it pleased about slavery; the fell spirit of 'abolitionism' must not influence the law makers; they must erect counties, create offices, and provide the usual machinery of civil government; and, finally, they must choose a capital for the Territory — and Reeder described exactly such a place as Pawnee.

Not a word did the Governor say, however, about the illegality of the election, not an intimation did he give that fraud had been practised at the polls. Had the Legislature stayed at Pawnee, Reeder was committed to the support of it as a lawful body; and the history of Kansas and the United States might have been changed. But the Legislature would not stay at Pawnee. Instead it adjourned to Shawnee Mission. The members said that, at Pawnee, they had to camp out on the prairie

[1] *Herald of Freedom*, June 9, 1855. This paper urged the people to 'spurn everything in the shape of laws' passed by the Legislature, 'let the consequences be what they may.'

[2] Reeder had assured the 'Pawnee Town Association' that he would make Pawnee the capital of the Territory. He had bought a great deal of land near the town site. *Kansas:* Connelley, I, 411.

[3] *Statutes of Kansas*, 1855, Preface, vii. Pawnee consisted of three houses, two stone and one frame. Testimony C. R. Mobley, before Howard Committee, 278.

The majority of the Congressional Committee actually refused to hear testimony that this protest was made. *Ib.*, 428–9.

because there were no boarding houses, that the little stone building provided for them by the town-site promoters had neither doors nor windows, that food was scarce and bad, that cholera had broken out.

Reeder vetoed the first two bills passed by the Legislature at Shawnee Mission, on the ground that it was sitting at the wrong place. That body passed the rejected bills over the Governor's veto, and all members signed a petition to the President for Reeder's removal. Before it reached Washington, however, he had been dismissed by reason of his town-site speculation at Pawnee.[1]

Outrageous! said the anti-administration press — the alleged cause for the removal deceived no one. Reeder's 'bold and decided stand' against the invasion of Kansas by the Missouri 'brigands' was the real reason. He had been dismissed because he refused to do 'the dirty work of Slavery.' [2]

Through the United States Attorney for the Territory, the Legislature asked the Territorial Supreme Court to decide upon the legality of the transfer of the place of holding its sessions. The Justices handed down an elaborate opinion that the adjournment was regular and correct.[3]

[1] The President's Kansas Message. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 356. Pawnee 'was a proposed town site only, which he and others were attempting to locate unlawfully upon land within a military reservation,' etc.

Another charge against Reeder was that he, two Justices of the Territorial Supreme Court, and the U.S. District Attorney had made 'disreputable attempts to speculate' in certain lands belonging to half-breed Indians. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, G. W. Manypenny, in an official report to the President, denounced this land deal.

Reeder made heated and elaborate defence. He explained that this transaction was only a contract to purchase in case the President approved it. Reeder to Manypenny, *Missouri Republican*, clipped in the *Herald of Freedom*, May 5, 1855. And see *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, v, 225–34; U.S. Senate Documents, II (1855–56), 19–26.

Manypenny answered Reeder with calm but scathing condemnation of his land speculations. Manypenny to Reeder, April 27, 1855. MS. The Commissioner's letter never was published and Reeder made no reply to it.

The Pawnee town-site charge was never satisfactorily answered. Although Atchison and others, including several Democratic Senators, had long demanded Reeder's removal, he must have been dismissed for the Pawnee scheme, regardless of political pressure.

[2] *Rockford* (Ill.) *Republican*, July 4, 1855; *Rock River Democrat*, Aug. 14, 1855; New York *Times*, July 31, Aug. 4, 1855. Many Democratic papers also condemned Reeder's removal. *Ib.*, Aug. 1, 1855. But the *Times* objected to Reeder's having recognized the Legislature.

[3] *House Journal*, Kansas Legislature, 1855, Appendix, 1–9. Justice S. W. Johnston, who came from Ohio, dissented, but did not file a separate opinion. *Herald of Freedom*, Sept. 1, 1855.

Reeder, Robinson, the Emigrant Aid Company, and other champions of freedom, were not alone in keeping alert eye on the main chance. The Chief Justice, Samuel D. Lecompte, and other Territorial officials, all pro-slavery men, also seized upon opportunities to get rich. They, too, founded a town and called it Lecompton. It was not far from Lawrence, and these two places became the headquarters of the opposing parties in the conflict that speedily came.[1]

Indeed, the closer this dramatic period is looked into, the clearer it becomes that the economic forces had much to do with the turbulence which sprang up. 'If it was not for land and town lot speculations, there would have been no trouble in Kansas,' said a disgusted settler when the disturbances were under way.[2]

With judicial assurance that their proceedings were legal, the Legislature went on with its work as if nothing untoward had happened. The usual laws necessary for all new communities were enacted and a Territorial Government set up. The whole civil and criminal code of Missouri was adopted in bulk. This included the statutes on Slavery, which were like those of other slave States; but the Legislature added drastic provisions — to aid in the escape of a slave was made punishable by death, and denial of the right to hold slaves was made a felony.

Thus slavery was established in Kansas, and the philanthropic part of the Emigrant Aid Company's plans was, for the moment, blasted. Also its financial prospects were hurt. The Legislature chose Lecompton as the permanent capital of the Territory. That meant that most of the money raised by taxation and all appropriations by Congress, would be spent on public buildings and improvements at this new seat of Government.[3] Lawrence, in the same vicinity, would be injured.

[1] 'Political Warfare in Early Kansas:' Wilbur Cortez Abbott, in *Journal American History*, III, 629–30. The contests over 'the peripatetic capital . . . were dictated chiefly by the activities of rival town-site companies.'

[2] *St. Clair* (Ill.) *Tribune*, May 31, 1856. 'According to this man's representations there exists really as much disturbance and "shooting of one another" — as he expressed it — about land claims, as about the free State question.'

'Occasional skirmishes still occur, but they are in general quarrels about "claims."' Kansas Correspondence, New York *Times*, June 10, in issue July 3, 1855.

[3] Abbott, *Journal American History*, III, 629–30.

From the instant that Reeder issued certificates to the majority of the Legislature Robinson determined to resist it. At Lawrence there was fighting talk against the 'bogus' Legislature; they would obey no laws passed by it, recognize no government created by it.[1] Supporters of the Legislature, among whom were all pro-slavery leaders, retorted that such talk could come only from outlaws — they must be put down, by force if necessary.

Stringfellow was enraged. A convention of pro-slavery men of western Missouri at Lexington, issued an address to the country. The charge was repeated that several States had incorporated 'large moneyed associations to *abolitionize Kansas*' and adjacent States. 'We do not hold it necessary . . . to wait until the torch is applied to our dwellings, or the knife to our throats, before we take measures for our security and the security of our firesides.' If Massachusetts could send an army to Kansas any State could send an army anywhere.[2]

Even before the Legislature met, the Free State men held meeting after meeting. They said as hard things about the other side as it said about them. 'In reply to the threats of war so frequently made in our neighboring State, our answer is, WE ARE READY,' ran one resolution.[3] A political party called the Free State Party was formed, a 'Central State Committee' was appointed, more military companies were organized.[4]

The North was ringing with alarming stories from Kansas.

[1] Testimony Dr. Wood and others. *Howard Committee.*

[2] Lexington Address, July, 1855, as quoted by Douglas in Senate speech, March, 1856. *Cong. Globe,* 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 288.

[3] These resolutions were published in full in the *Illinois Journal,* July 18, 1855. Capitals those of original resolutions. *Herald of Freedom,* June 30, 1855.

[4] 'Our people have now formed themselves into four military companies. . . . We want *arms.*' Robinson to Thayer, April, 1855; *Life and Public Services of George Luther Stearns:* Frank Preston Stearns, 112–3.

On July 4, 1855, two of these companies paraded about Lawrence. 'Two organized military companies in uniform, and a large number of volunteers, were marching and countermarching. . . . Flags were floating, guns sounding,' etc. *Herald of Freedom,* July 7, 1855.

In his 4th of July oration, Robinson exclaimed: 'Let every man acquit himself like a man who knows his rights, and, knowing, dares maintain them.' *Ib.*

Sumner was then making his tour of the South, and at St. Louis was warned not to go to Kansas. The *Herald of Freedom,* Aug. 11, 1855, ridiculed such warning, saying that it was 'perfectly safe' for Sumner or any one to come to Kansas.

The Republican Party was growing in aggressiveness and strength. In this situation, Lincoln, in the middle of August, 1855, wrote two important letters. In one, to George Robertson, of Kentucky, he said in effect that slavery could not be abolished without war. 'Experience has demonstrated, I think, that there is no peaceful extinction of slavery in prospect for us.' The Tsar of Russia would abdicate and free his serfs sooner than American masters would voluntarily give up their slaves, he prophesied. 'Our political problem now is, "Can we as a nation continue together permanently — forever — half slave and half free?" The problem is too mighty for me — may God, in his mercy, superintend the solution.' [1]

A confidential letter to Speed at about the same time is still more explicit. Speed had written Lincoln on the political situation and asked the views of his old friend. Belatedly, Lincoln gave them. Speed had said that, while on abstract principle slavery was wrong, he would rather see the Union dissolved than yield his legal right to his slaves, especially at the demand of those who were not themselves interested. Nobody denied that right, answered Lincoln; certainly he did not. 'I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down and caught and carried back to their stripes and unrequited toil; but I bite my lips and keep quiet.'

Lincoln reminded Speed of their steamboat trip together in 1841 when shackled slaves were on board, and he declared that the sight 'was a continued torment' to him.[2] Lincoln saw something of the kind, he said, every time he touched the Ohio or any other slave border. Surely he argued, he had an interest in anything that made him miserable all the time.

Speed had said that while he would hang the Missouri leaders of the Kansas outrages, yet if that Territory fairly voted for slavery she must be admitted or the Union dissolved; but, retorted Lincoln, 'how if she votes herself a slave State unfairly? . . . must she still be admitted, or the Union dissolved?' A fair decision of the slavery question in Kansas was impossible under

[1] Lincoln to Robertson, Aug. 15, 1855. *Works*, II, 278–81.

[2] Compare with Lincoln's letter to Mary Speed, written immediately after this journey; and with Lincoln's part in the Matson case. Vol. I, 321, 392.

the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Lincoln asserted; for, 'it was conceived in violence,' is maintained in violence, and is being executed in violence. Why complain of the manner in which that law was being carried out, since it was 'being executed in the precise way which was intended from the first.'

See what 'that beautiful [Kansas] Legislature' had done already! — enacted a law to hang a man merely for telling a negro of his legal rights! Through violence and fraud Kansas probably would form a slave Constitution and, with it, ask admission to the Union, and Lincoln would oppose admission, he declared. Still, if Kansas was admitted with slavery, he would not 'on that account attempt to dissolve the Union.'

The opponents of Kansas as a slave State were likely to be beaten because 'party necessity' would swing most Democrats to the support of any party measure, said Lincoln. That was how Douglas had induced the Democratic majority in the Illinois Legislature to endorse the Kansas-Nebraska bill. That, too, was the method by which slave-breeders and slave-traders made themselves the absolute 'masters' of good men like Speed.[1]

After its formal organization, the Free State Party of Kansas held several conventions. Clad in blue woollen shirts, wearing rough boots and slouched hats, their beards unkempt, the delegates discussed learnedly their duties and their rights.[2] All were defiant of the Legislature and the Territorial Government. One convention at Lawrence, on August 14, 1855, resolved that, inspired by the spirit of 'resistance to tyrants,' the members pledged '"our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honors" to a resistance to its [Territorial Government's] authority.'

Another convention at Big Springs, a place of half a dozen 'shake-cabins and log-huts,'[3] was notable. There Reeder, in a speech that bristled with bayonets, adjured the settlers in Halleck's words to

> 'Strike — for our altars and our fires;
> Strike — for the green graves of our sires;
> God and our native land!'

The sentiment elicited cheers and the orator was unanimously

[1] Lincoln to Speed, Aug. 24, 1855. *Works*, II, 281–7.
[2] Richardson, 43–4. [3] Spring, 64.

nominated for Delegate in Congress. Another belligerent expression in a wrathful resolution aroused even more enthusiasm: if peaceable opposition to the laws should fail, '*we will resist them to the bloody issue.*' Still another pronouncement was that the Free State Party would allow no free negroes in Kansas. Particular attention was paid to the military side of the Party's program, and a call was sent out for more arms.

The *Herald of Freedom* became almost as bellicose as the *Squatter Sovereign:* 'Come one, come all, slaveocrats and nullifiers; we have rifles enough, and bullets enough, to send you all to your (and Judas's) "own place." "If you're coming, why don't you come along?"' [1]

The Big Springs Convention was dominated by one of the strangest characters in American history, James H. Lane of Indiana. He was to have frequent and picturesque contact with Lincoln in the years swiftly approaching, and he now became the leading figure in Kansas affairs. Lane was tall and lank, his long face deeply lined, cheeks sunken, black hair thick and tousled, dark eyes brooding and hypnotic. His clothes were poor and neglected, and, in all weathers throughout all seasons, he wore an old, moth-eaten, black bearskin overcoat. Lane had been Lieutenant Governor of Indiana, a gallant and skilful Colonel in the Mexican War, a Representative in Congress where he voted for the Kansas-Nebraska Act, thus wrecking his political fortunes in his District. The Indiana courts had refused to grant Lane a divorce from his wife. Soon after he arrived in Kansas he applied to the Legislature for marital release, but was again denied.

Then he turned upon that unreasonable body. After vainly

[1] As quoted in Stephens's speech in House, June 28, 1856. *Cong. Globe,* 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 723–9. *Herald of Freedom,* May 5, 1855, quoted Corwin on the Mexican War: 'Welcome the invaders to Kansas "with bloody hands and to hospitable graves,"' etc.

The New York *Tribune,* Sept. 8, 1855, printed a long and savage editorial from the *Squatter Sovereign* of Aug. 28: 'Emigrant Aid Societies spend their millions and billions . . . *yet we will continue to tar and feather, drown, lynch and hang, every white livered Abolitionist who dares to pollute our soil. . . . We confidently hope that the last national Congress may meet in Washington on the first Monday in December next.* . . . Never again will the Southern States . . . suffer dictation at the hands of a set of negro-stealers. . . . The South [has] had *sufficient cause to secede during every twelve months for the past ten years.*' Italics *Tribune's.*

trying to organize a 'National Democratic Party' in Kansas, he belatedly joined the Free State Party and speedily became the leader of it. He was immoral and brave, cunning and eloquent, audacious and resourceful. His skill in intrigue was uncanny and his power over audiences like magic. In short Lane was endowed with a kind of mad genius. His insanity and suicide just after the end of the Civil War were but the natural outcome of his mental and nervous condition for a score of years.

Directed by Lane and Robinson, another convention of the Free State Party at Topeka,[1] October 23, adopted a Free State constitution and provided for Free State Party elections of a legislature, State officers, and a Representative in Congress. This constitution prohibited slavery; but, if a majority at an election to ratify the constitution so decided, free negroes were to be excluded from the new State. In due course a prodigious majority of the Free State Party voted for this clause.[2]

One of the members of the Free State Constitutional Convention was Delahay. He gave Alabama as the place from which he had come to Kansas. Obviously the Free State men were not wholly unfamiliar with the wiles of politics. It looked better for Delahay to appear to have come from a slave State. But he vigorously opposed the project of setting up an independent State government — only Congress could abolish the Legislature which had been created under its authority, he said. It was Lincoln who spoke thus — the idea was his, though the voice was that of Delahay.[3]

[1] Richardson, 43–4. Even two years later, 1857, Topeka was only a hamlet of fifteen or twenty houses on a green prairie. *Ib.*, 41.

[2] *John Brown:* Oswald Garrison Villard, 105.

'Many who are known as Free State men are not Anti-Slavery in our Northern acceptation of the word. They are more properly negro haters, who vote Free State to keep negroes out, free or slave; one-half of them would go for Slavery if negroes are to be allowed here at all.' Extracts from private letter from a 'well informed citizen of Kansas' to a friend in New York in the New York *Tribune*, July 13, 1855; and see Thayer, 89–90.

[3] *Report Senate Committee*, No. 34, March 12, 1856. 'The gentleman from Lawrence [Col. Lane] has assured . . . in advocating an immediate State organization, . . . that neither government nor local law exists in this Territory. Sir, I must dissent . . . I deny that a Territorial government can be legally abolished by the election of another government. I hold . . . that the power of a Territorial government ceases only by the enactment of the body which created it; in other words, that the Government and laws of Kansas can be abolished by Congress alone.'

Delahay said that he was against 'any overt act of rebellion.' But the radicals had

Supporters of the established Government held a counter meeting. It was made up of all pro-slavery men, and several Free State men who balked at the radical action of the Free State Party.[1] The new Governor, Wilson Shannon, of Ohio, presided. He had had a career of some note. He had been a successful lawyer, twice Governor of Ohio, Minister to Mexico, Representative in Congress. Shannon was a tall, thin, blue-eyed man, of slow speech, grave demeanor, deliberate movement. Until he was sent to Kansas he had borne a good reputation. Immediately upon the tender of the Kansas governorship to Shannon, Greeley attacked him — he was 'to act as the bill-signing automaton for the Atchison and Stringfellow ruffians.' [2]

This convention also formed a party to oppose the Free State Party, and called it the Law and Order Party. On a Committee to prepare and issue an Address to the country, were six men from free States and four from slave States. One of the members was John Calhoun of Springfield, Lincoln's old-time friend, employer, and mentor in the New Salem days. Calhoun had just been appointed Surveyor General of the Territory.

The Law and Order Party's resolutions denounced the conduct of the Free State Party as 'revolutionary' and 'treasonable,' said that law and order were the first essentials under any form of government, called on all good citizens, regardless of their views on slavery, to support the Government, and branded as false the stories printed about Kansas in 'abolition' papers.

Thus was the issue formally joined between the Law and Order Party and the Free State Party — the latter determined, at all hazards, to repudiate the laws and defy the Government of the Territory; the former equally resolved to enforce the laws and maintain the Government. It was 'a fearful issue,' said the New York *Times;* 'blood must be shed on the ground of Kansas.' [3]

their way and the machinery was set in motion to create a separate State government in direct antagonism to the existing Government.

[1] Testimony Dr. John P. Wood, *Howard Committee*, 659–60. 'There were Free State men in Lawrence who opposed this course [of the Free State Party], and oppose it yet [June 2, 1856]. I myself co-operated with the free-State party until they took these revolutionary steps, and then I left them.'

[2] New York *Tribune*, Aug. 16, 1855.

[3] Sept. 22, 1855.

Back of all was the slavery question; but, for a time, it did not wholly dominate the situation, since many Free State men were members of the Law and Order Party. Moreover, there was then no reasonable probability that slavery would take deep root, as an impartial journalist who was in Kansas at the time testifies: 'In the entire Territory, there were not a hundred bondsmen.' [1]

The clash came as naturally and suddenly as a thunder-storm on a sultry day. A heavily armed band of Free State men rescued from the Sheriff of Douglas County a fellow partisan whom that officer had arrested on a peace warrant sworn out by a pro-slavery settler, and with a posse was taking to the County seat. In wild alarm the Sheriff, Samuel J. Jones, a violent pro-slavery man, asked the Governor to send the militia to his aid; 'open rebellion already having commenced' in Kansas, Jones wrote. Some twelve hundred men answered Shannon's call, but most of them came from Missouri. Thus began the investment of Lawrence, where those who had rescued the prisoner had taken him. Jones had also secured warrants for all whom he knew among his assailants.

In Lawrence a 'Committee of Safety' prepared for defence. The men wanted by the Sheriff were hurried out of town. Trenches were dug, breast-works thrown up, a bastion built for a cannon sent from the East. The gun was brought from Kansas City [2] and mounted while the militia were closing in. Hundreds of Free State men from scattered settlements hastened to join their comrades in Lawrence. Nearly all had Sharp's rifles, and constantly Lane drilled them.

The militia camped hard by, on the Wakarusa River. They were better supplied with whisky than with arms, and were eager for the fray. But the Free State men had whisky too, and, as we shall now see, used it with more effect. As to military equipment and discipline, they could easily have beaten their assailants, assuming both sides to have been equally brave.

So grave did matters look, that the Governor came and strove

[1] Richardson, 42–3. The anti-administration press scorned the issue of 'law and order' as a pretext, and insisted that the real question was the fastening of slavery on Kansas by the Missouri invasion. New York *Times*, Feb. 22, 1856.

[2] Then 'a straggling village of scarcely a thousand inhabitants.' Eldridge, 12.

to pacify the belligerents. Finally he patched up a truce with the Free State men and ordered the militia to disband. This 'Treaty of Peace,' as it was pompously called, was signed by Lane and Robinson on behalf of the 'citizens of the Territory,' on the one side, and by the Governor on the other. In this document all three men lied with hearty good will. Lane and Robinson denied all knowledge of any organization to resist the laws and declared that Free State men were and always had been willing to help execute them; Shannon affirmed that he had not asked and would not ask outsiders to interfere in the Government of Kansas. Express disavowal was made of opinion as to the legality of the Legislature.[1]

So, at the Free State Hotel, a 'grand peace party' was given, which lasted all night. Many of the 'invaders' including Sheriff Jones were present, a band played, speeches were made, there was much conviviality, and the famous 'Wakarusa War' was over.[2]

The trouble had not been settled, however, without guile and the use of unseemly methods by the champions of freedom. Whisky flowed for the righteous as well as for the wicked, and to more purpose, and deception was as effective as the display of Sharp's rifles. The story was told by the frankest of the defenders.

Just before the truce an old man with his four sons had driven into Lawrence. Their wagon was loaded with more rifles than they needed themselves, and they distributed the excess among those not yet supplied. The father was over six feet tall, his face grim and aggressive, out-thrust chin closely shaven. His gray eyes were steady, cold, emotionless. A heavy shock of graying hair was thrown back from a low, hard brow. His name was John Brown, and he lived with his sons at a settlement called Osawatomie.

[1] Shannon actually gave a commission to Robinson and Lane as 'commanders of the enrolled citizens at Lawrence,' authorizing them to use the 'force under your command . . . as in your judgment shall best secure' peace and order. *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 12, 1856.

[2] In its account of the 'Wakarusa War,' the *Herald of Freedom*, Dec. 15, 1855, said: 'Eleven full companies of fifty-four each were duly registered, . . . besides the cavalry and artillery companies, and numberless persons who were not enrolled, but held themselves in readiness to fight where they could be most effective,' etc. Robinson made a speech to his 'FELLOW SOLDIERS.'

When the 'Treaty' was read to the crowd, Brown mounted a dry-goods box and denounced it as a shifty device — only the shedding of blood could win the Free State cause, he said. His harangue fell on deaf ears. Disgusted with both sides, Brown wrote to his wife an account of the affair.

When Shannon came into Lawrence to arrange a peaceable settlement, Brown related, the Free State leaders 'took advantage of his Cowardice, and Folly; and by means of that and the free use of Whiskey; and some Trickery; succeeded in getting a written arrangement with him much to their own liking.... He gave up all pretension of further attempt to enforce the enactments of the Bogus Legislature, and retired subject to the derision and scoffs of the Free State men (into whose hands he had committed the welfare and protection of Kansas); and to the pity of some; and the curses of others of the invading force. ... Free State men have only hereafter to retain the footing they have gained; *and Kansas is free.*' [1]

The Free State Party ignored the regular elections designated by the Legislature, and held elections of their own. Except at one place where a pro-slavery man was wounded and a Free State man killed, the Law and Order Party and pro-slavery men did little more than to sneer at the Free State elections as the futile nonsense of lawless men. The person chosen as the Free State Representative in Congress was Delahay.[2]

The winter of 1855–56 was one of the hardest ever known in Kansas. It began early and lasted until March. Often the thermometer was far below zero. Suffering was widespread and intense. For a while conflict was suspended; but Sheriff Jones and his Missouri supporters were preparing to serve his hitherto futile warrants. Lane and Robinson admitted in writing that they had agreed in the 'Treaty' to help execute the laws; but they sent six or seven of the most effective members of the Free State Party on a tour of the North to get money and arms.[3] The renewal of strife was near at hand.

[1] Brown to wife and children, Osawatomie, K.T., Dec. 16, 1855. Villard, 119. Italics Brown's.

[2] At the voting on the Topeka Constitution, at Leavenworth, Dec. 15, 1855, pro-slavery men destroyed the office of Delahay's paper. Wilder, 90.

[3] The order was for these emissaries, headed by Lane, 'to visit several States of the

To the end of the winter of 1855–56, only two men had been killed in political collisions; but, all over the North, the anti-administration press grew fiercer in the cause of Free Kansas, and ever more vituperative of the Border Ruffians. Kansas Aid Societies multiplied. Scarcely a town was without an organization to help sufferers in that Territory. And assistance was sorely needed, for the privations of the settlers on the desolate plains during that terrible winter were extreme. But while clothes and provisions were the requisites, the most stirring appeals were for rifles and cash.

In Springfield, Herndon was fiercely ardent, as usual. He and other radicals were, he tells us, 'almost revolutionary,' and were for anything 'however desperate, to promote and defend the cause of freedom.' The Abolitionists took the lead. They wanted to fight. Two of the men sent from Kansas to stir up the North held a meeting at the Illinois capital. Lincoln was there and, after the agitators had aroused the passions of the crowd, he was urged to speak. He did. Nothing more characteristic ever fell from his lips:

Be more moderate, he said; cast out bitterness. Avoid extreme measures; use no inflammatory language — such things might cause bloodshed. Do not think of resorting to the bullet — 'you can better succeed with the ballot.' Moral influence, rather than force, was the true method of righting wrong and promoting good. 'Let there be peace. Revolutionize through the ballot box,' and thus restore the Government to the love of the people by making it again stand for liberty and justice. But any attempt 'to resist the laws of Kansas by force is criminal and wicked.' Thus Lincoln cooled the heated assemblage; but he gave his share to the fund being raised.[1]

Union, to ask appropriations of munitions of war, and means of defense of the citizens of Kansas.' The reason to be given for this action was that Southern States had appropriated money 'for carrying war into Kansas.' This report was generally believed and continued to be credited for more than a generation.

[1] Herndon, II, 379–80. The *State Register*, Feb. 12, 1856, thus made note of this meeting: 'Two individuals, named Conway and Smith, held forth upon the "wrongs of Kansas." From beginning to end the remarks of these two men were tissues of misrepresentation, exaggeration and falsehood, doled out in model abolition style.' They said that their mission was to collect money and arms for the Free State Party, 'a faction,' commented the Democratic organ, 'that stands in open opposition to the laws.'

The *State Journal*, however, bitterly denounced the sending of arms to Kansas. Beecher had preached his notorious sermon, inciting 'the friends of freedom' everywhere to supply the settlers with Sharp's rifles — one of them would have more moral influence over slave-holders than 'a hundred Bibles,' he said.[1] Throughout the North some preachers had followed Beecher's example and many pulpits had become rostrums for war talk. Thereafter Sharp's rifles were called 'Beecher's Bibles.'

Lincoln deplored these appeals to force. In a scathing editorial the *State Journal* lashed those ministers who indulged in such talk. To give 'death dealing weapons into the hands of the young recruits raised for Kansas,' was foolish and wicked. Yet such a course was urged in most meetings held to help the emigrants. Even clergymen were proclaiming 'the "religion" of the thing, so that thus doubly armed, the young zealot is ushered into Kansas taught to regard all who differ with him as lawful game, and fully equipped to bring them down on the slightest provocation.' [2]

Throughout the winter the situation in Kansas grew worse. After the Free State Party elected its own legislature, the *Squatter Sovereign* declared that the Abolitionists must be soundly thrashed, or they would overturn the Government. The *Kickapoo Ranger* announced that the Abolitionists had again begun war and must be driven from the Territory. Atchison urged his followers to prepare for another invasion — the Free State Legislature was soon to meet and a Free State Government to be set up.

[1] *New York Evening Post* as quoted in Wilder, 109.

[2] *Illinois State Journal*, April 4, 1856. The *Journal* quoted, with emphatic approval, a vitriolic editorial attack on Beecher for his 'Sharp's rifles sermon,' in the *Buffalo* (N.Y.) *Commercial*. After showing the wrong and folly of exhortations from the pulpit to fight and kill, the *Commercial* said:

'The ruling passion of Henry Ward Beecher is a love of notoriety. . . . He prefers the plaudits of a mob to the calm approval of wise, Christian men. . . . He . . . preaches in a "don't-care-a-damn" style of oratory. . . . With him the pulpit is an arena for the exhibition of profane and daring wit. . . . He loves to say things which will be repeated with gusto in bar rooms and drinking saloons, and produce the impression among those who frequent such places, that he is one of them in a black coat, and that he "could an' he would" swear a more round, telling, "satisfactory" oath than the most eloquently profane among them.'

Robinson and Lane wrote to the President asking for United States troops to save Kansas from an 'overwhelming force' which was about to sweep over the Territory with fire and sword; but Shannon had gone to Washington and told Pierce what he knew and thought. The President promptly sent to Congress his famous Kansas message, of which we shall presently make brief note. All the power of the National Government would be used, said Pierce, to uphold law and maintain order.

Then came a proclamation to the same effect. The President ordered those who were combining to resist established authority to disperse; and he warned all alike who planned insurrection within Kansas, or aggressive intrusion from without, that both would be opposed by the militia and by Federal troops.[1] The Secretary of State, William L. Marcy of New York, authorized Shannon to call upon these forces to suppress 'insurrectionary combinations or armed resistance to the laws.'

So when the Free State Legislature met, 'Governor' Robinson, in his message, urged a pacific course; so long as they had the 'sanction' of Congress, even the Territorial laws and Government must not be resisted. In accordance with this change of policy, the provisional lawmakers merely elected Lane and Reeder to the national Senate, memorialized Congress to admit Kansas under the Free State constitution, passed a few laws of no moment, which were not to be effective until Congress recognized the Free State Government, and adjourned until July 4, 1856.

Thus, with charges of 'fraud' and counter charges of 'treason,' came the collision that brought on guerilla warfare with all its fell results to the nation. Sheriff Jones was knocked down in Lawrence while trying to make an arrest. He went for military help, returned with a small squad of United States

[1] Proclamation of Feb. 11, 1856. This State paper condemned equally the preparations in Missouri for an 'armed intervention in the affairs' of Kansas, and the raising of money and buying of rifles in 'remote States . . . for the same purpose.' If 'the fury of faction or fanaticism' anywhere, should bring about war in Kansas, 'it shall be between lawless violence on one side and conservative order on the other, wielded by the legal authority of the General Government.' The Proclamation was drawn by Marcy. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 390–1.

soldiers, served several warrants, and was shot and seriously wounded by a Free State man. Robinson and the Free State citizens formally 'condemned' the shooting — but the assailant was permitted to escape. Jones, who was at first thought to be fatally hurt, recovered; but pro-slavery men and their newspapers demanded blood — the Abolitionists must be 'exterminated,' cried Stringfellow.

The United States District Court was in session at Lecompton. Under instructions from Judge Samuel D. Lecompte, the Grand Jury indicted several leaders of the Free State Party for 'constructive treason.' Among them were Robinson, Lane, and Reeder. Lane and others were in the Northern States arousing great audiences to fury. Reeder escaped in disguise, and Robinson, who had learned from a Free State member of the Grand Jury that indictments would be returned, tried to get away, too. At Lexington, Missouri, he was taken from a steamboat, and held there until a requisition from Governor Shannon came, when he was delivered to the Territorial authorities. In three or four months Robinson was released on bond, went East and added his voice to that of other Republican orators from Kansas in the campaign which we are soon to review.[1]

The *Herald of Freedom* had been quite as violent against the 'bogus' Legislature and Government, as the *Squatter Sovereign* was against the Free State Legislature and Government. The Grand Jury at Lecompton returned a presentment against the *Herald of Freedom* and the *Kansas Free State* as nuisances, and against the Free State Hotel at Lawrence, because it had been built as a fortress. When the Grand Jury acted, writs were issued by the Court to destroy the two newspapers and the hotel.[2]

Not long before the Free State leaders were indicted, a picturesque company of young men arrived in western Missouri. They came chiefly from Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina and numbered about four hundred. They were commanded by 'Major' Jefferson Buford, a lawyer of Eufaula, Alabama, who paid out of his own pocket a large part of the expenses of the

[1] For this 'false imprisonment,' Robinson put in a claim for $10,000 before the Kansas Claim Commission as soon as the Free State forces prevailed. *Appeal to the Record:* Connelley, 24.

[2] Villard, 142–3; Wilder, 119–21.

expedition, the remainder coming from several private donations.[1]

The men brought no rifles — instead the Baptist Church at Montgomery had given them Bibles on their departure. They carried two banners inscribed 'The Supremacy of the White Race,' and 'Kansas the Outpost;' and some wore badges bearing the words 'Alabama for Kansas: Bibles not Rifles.'[2] Two or three other groups, each of twenty or thirty men, also came from the South. One little company from Charleston was composed mostly of clerks, induced to go on the adventure by a few fire-eating politicians; some of these boys expected to hunt buffalo.[3]

At a pro-slavery reception at Fort Leavenworth several of these young men made speeches. They said that they came as pioneers to uphold the laws; that the territories were common property; 'keep the constitution and laws on our side and we can put to flight a host of Abolitionists with their Sharp's rifles.'[4]

[1] Buford paid $10,000 and other contributors $14,000. Channing, VI, 164–5, and authorities cited. Prof. Channing's account is the best short statement of Southern interest in Kansas.

[2] For a thorough treatment of this incident, see 'The Buford Expedition to Kansas:' Walter L. Fleming, *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VI, 38–48.

'It was intended that the Buford party should go armed, but in March [1856] Major Buford announced that in deference to the President's proclamation, and in consonance with the true design of the expedition, it would go unarmed. . . .

'The battalion attended divine service on Sunday at the Baptist Church. After the sermon the pastor, Rev. I. T. Tichenor, proposed that, since some ministers at the North had been raising money to equip emigrants with Sharp's rifles, they present each man of Buford's battalion with a more powerful weapon — the Bible.'

Money for the Bibles was subscribed and at a church celebration next day 'the Rev. Dorman of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, offered up a prayer asking the blessings of heaven for Buford and his men.' *Ib.*, 41–2.

A correspondent of the New York *Tribune* stated that on the journey from St. Louis the Bibles were thrown away, and when the company reached Kansas it had arms. New York *Tribune*, May 13, 1856; Villard, 137.

[3] 'Dr. Albert Morall: Pro-Slavery soldier in Kansas. Statement and Autobiography,' *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, XIV, 126–42. Dr. Morall stayed in Kansas after the guerilla fighting ended, returned to South Carolina at the outbreak of the Civil War to enlist as a Confederate Soldier, and, when the War was over, went back to Kansas where he spent the rest of his life.

[4] *Leavenworth Herald*, April 26, 1856.

'I have supposed that the most violent of the Pro-Slavery party have been hired to come here, as they are from the South, young men, broken-down lawyers, and sons of cotton-planters.' Some companies 'with Atchison in Missouri, and some other Missourians, form the head and front of all the violent proceedings which have taken place here. The defeated politicians above spoken of are from the North, and are not the bowie-

But all were for slavery, almost passionately so. In short, these young Southerners were, in purpose and sincerity, much like the settlers sent to Kansas by the Emigrant Aid Societies — one group was determined to make the Territory a free State, the other to make it a slave State; and the members of each group frankly said so. Buford's men were scattered over the Territory, presumably to take up claims and become pro-slavery citizens and voters; but they and other Southern companies were brought together as part of the posse of the United States Marshal to serve warrants against those indicted for treason.

Thus was the stage set for 'the sack of Lawrence,' an event that became one of the most dramatic themes for Republican papers and stump speakers throughout the blazing Presidential campaign of 1856.

On May 21, that village was surrounded by the Marshal's posse. It numbered about eight hundred men. Many were from Missouri. Among them was Atchison, in command of a company of riflemen. Another band, called the 'Red Shirts,' was composed of young men from Virginia. Jones, too, was there with his still unserved writs. The little army brought five cannon, and carried a red flag on which was inscribed 'Southern Rights'

> 'Let Yankees tremble, abolitionists fall,
> Our motto is, Give Southern rights to all.'

Another banner was of black cotton cloth, with a serpent in the center and above it 'South Carolina Minute Men.'

Taking with them their Sharp's rifles, the fighting men of Lawrence had left town, because the feeble temporary 'Committee of Safety' had decided on a policy of non-resistance. So without opposition, two arrests were made and Jones proceeded to demand whatever arms were in the place, and also to destroy the newspapers and the hotel.

Major Buford and other officers protested; they were there to uphold law, not to violate it; to protect property not to destroy it. Jones would not listen. Neither would the men. All liquor

knife bullies you hear so much of. . . . The quickest way of putting this question at rest is to meet them with their own weapons,' etc. From private letter by a citizen of Kansas to a New York friend, in New York *Tribune*, July 13, 1855.

in the Free State Hotel had been taken and what followed can only be explained on the ground that the Sheriff's posse were drunk. What they did justified the tales about the Border Ruffians that had been appearing for more than a year.

Jones demanded and received the surrender of the Free State armament. Four small cannon and one twelve-pound howitzer were given up. But few Sharp's rifles could be found. The Sheriff sent two companies to each of the newspaper offices, the presses were broken and thrown in the street, the type flung into the river. The stout walls of the hotel were proof against some thirty cannon shot, and even the explosion of kegs of powder placed within; so the building was set on fire.[1]

For these things there was not the least warrant of law. In sheer wantonness, the posse, now out of all control, pillaged private houses. The inhabitants, mostly women and children, were terrified. No resistance was made. Finally some one applied the torch to Robinson's house and it, too, was burnt.[2] Nobody was hurt in fighting, however, though two young Free State men had been killed some distance from Lawrence the night before; and, by accident, due to their own negligence, one of the posse was killed and two wounded while the hotel was burning and the looting going on.[3] But the Emigrant Aid Com-

[1] *Lecompton Union*, May 24, clipped in New York *Tribune*, June 7, 1856. The headlines of the *Union* article were:

'LAWRENCE TAKEN!
GLORIOUS TRIUMPH OF THE LAW AND ORDER
PARTY OVER FANATICISM IN KANSAS.
FULL PARTICULARS.'

The New York *Tribune's* caption over that paper's reproduction of the *Union's* account was:

'THE SACK OF LAWRENCE.
OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE BORDER RUFFIANS.'

The story in the *Union* was written on the ground by one of the posse.

[2] Next year, Robinson put in a claim before the Kansas Claim Commissioner for $15,800 loss of house, furniture, etc. *Appeal to the Record:* Connelley, 23–4. Robinson's house was a small frame building fourteen by twenty feet and cost about $400.

[3] The charge of looting was stoutly denied by members of the Southern companies. Morall, 126. The *Lecompton Union, supra*, said:

'Before entering town, our commanders instructed each member of his company of the consequences befalling the violation of any private property. As far as we can learn, they attended strictly to these instructions. One act we regret to mention — the firing of Robinson's house. . . . It was a private residence and should have remained untouched.'

The evidence is conclusive, however, that the little town was pillaged.

pany lost heavily by the destruction of its hotel and its equipment.

Only by reading accounts in anti-Administration newspapers of the day, can any idea be had of the descriptions of 'the sack of Lawrence,' that were printed all over the North. Nor do these stories, taken by themselves, give more than a suggestion of their effect on the public mind; for they came on top of a long series of sensational tales which began to appear at least four months before the descent of the Missourians on Kansas, March 30, 1855.[1] It is hard to tell how much truth there was in them. Not all witnesses sustain them. 'I know of no one being treated unkindly who minds his own business,' testified John E. Ingalls, who went to Kansas from near Boston in 1854.[2]

When Congress convened in December, 1855, the troubles in Kansas were the principal subject of talk. But the President said nothing until he sent to Congress his Kansas Message. When it reached the House, that body became almost riotous.[3] In this document emphasis was laid on Reeder's delays, his endorsement of the election of the Legislature, his repeated recognitions of that body, his puerile excuse for breaking with it, his removal from office because of the Pawnee adventure.

At some length, the President related what had happened in

[1] The broad excuse for the action of the Law and Order Party, and especially for the attack on Lawrence was: 'Robinson & Co. . . . raised the crusading flag against all men opposed to them in sentiment. In their wake followed sub-employees, selected for the occasion; . . . the "Aid Society" hirelings of discharged convicts and abandoned desperadoes. . . . These are the characters we had to deal with. Finally the election [March 30, 1855] came off and the Pro-Slavery party defeated them; then the great cry of "Border Ruffian" went forth to the East, appealing for protection against the Missourians; it had the desired effect; men at the North and East suffered themselves to be duped and swindled into the support of this appeal.' *Lecompton Union*, in New York *Tribune*, June 7, 1856.

[2] *Howard Committee*, 841–4. Ingalls accompanied an Emigrant Aid Co. party, but would not join it. He was the uncle of the well-known John J. Ingalls, Republican Senator from Kansas from 1873 to 1891.

In 1857 a book by an Englishman, Thomas H. Gladstone, a correspondent of the London *Times*, was published which greatly strengthened the view of the Border Ruffians that prevailed throughout the North. A more partisan or inaccurate volume could not have been written. Gladstone saw some of the drunken men who had sacked Lawrence — 'drunken, bellowing, blood-thirsty demons,' etc. Ignorant of the American frontier, he had no sympathy with frontier conditions, and he gave out the idea that the riotous crowd he described was typical of the border counties and the South. *The Englishman in Kansas*, 41.

[3] New York *Times*, Jan. 26, 1856.

Kansas. Conditions had become so bad, he said, that Congress should provide for the taking of a census and the election of a Constitutional Convention so that the Territory could be prepared for admission 'through regular and lawful means.' [1]

It is hard to see what else the President could have said. But in Congress and throughout the North he was held up to scorn as the mere puppet of the Slave Power which spoke through his wooden lips — the ventriloquism was so clumsy that all could see the trick, said the anti-administration press.

The struggle became one of party alone. 'I come before the Senate to-day as a Republican, or, as some prefer to call me, a Black Republican,' defiantly exclaimed Wade; 'the free State population [of Kansas] have been conquered and subdued by the border ruffians.' [2] Debate was earnest and harsh. Why, asked Toombs, did not Governor Reeder try to stop the Missouri invasion? Why, at the very least, did he not report it to the President? Reeder had found nothing wrong with the Legislature until it adjourned from his town of Pawnee to somebody else's town. The whole matter was being used by partisans, solely to inflame sectional hatred upon which alone they thrived. The outcome might be civil war; the North would fight and so would the South; but those who would set good men to cutting one another's throats would, themselves, keep out of danger.[3]

From the Committee on Territories Douglas brought in a comprehensive report on Kansas affairs.[4] It was an elaborate argument for the Law and Order Party. Blame for starting the trouble was laid on the Emigrant Aid Company. While this document was fiercely partisan, it stated the facts. But it was ferociously assailed as a 'sophistical' defence of the Slave Power. Senator Jacob Collamer of Vermont submitted a minority report. It was a defence of the Emigrant Aid Company and of all that the Free State Party had done. This paper was hailed as the fearless voice of righteousness and truth.

Many bills on Kansas were presented in both Houses. Douglas offered one in accordance with the President's message.

[1] *Messages:* Richardson, v, 352–60. Jan. 24, 1856.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 749, 756.

[3] *Ib.*, 115–8, Feb. 28, 1856. [4] *Senate Committee Report*, No. 34, March 12, 1856.

Toombs proposed a better bill, the best, indeed, that was devised: let a strictly non-partisan commission composed of men of high character go to Kansas, take a census, apportion the Territory, provide for an election on November 4, 1856, of delegates to a Constitutional Convention — only those who had lived in the Territory for at least three months to be allowed to vote. On December 1, 1856, the members thus elected were to convene and form a State government.

The measure, however, came from a Southern Senator. So it was bitterly attacked and was beaten in the House by a party vote. That body then passed a bill of its own providing for the election of a new Territorial legislature, the dismissal of criminal prosecutions for offences against Territorial laws and the restoration of the Missouri Compromise. It was a purely partisan manœuvre; everyone knew that it could not pass the Senate or be signed by the President. But the Presidential campaign was at hand and the Dunn bill, as it was called, stated the position of the Republican Party.

While House and Senate were struggling with the problem and sheer partisanship was blocking any action, Lane came to Washington with what he said was the Free State Constitution and got Cass to present it to the Senate. It was a tattered document. Lane had scratched out sentences, interlined others, and deleted entirely the clause excluding slaves and free negroes. Moreover he, himself, had signed to the instrument the names, of the members of the Free State Constitutional Convention.

Douglas, to whose Committee the paper was referred, pointed out these facts and branded the so-called Constitution as a forgery.[1] Of course the Senate ignored it. Indeed, the Republicans hardly tried to defend it.[2] Seward offered a bill for the admission of Kansas under the Free State Constitution. He knew that it would not pass, but it was good party strategy.

So nothing was done to straighten out the tangled affairs of Kansas. Instead, the Republican majority in the House made

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 384, April 14, 1856.

[2] *Ib.*, Pt. 1, 861. Seward disavowed all knowledge of the memorial. After talking with Lane, Cass came into the Senate and declared that he thought it a fraud.

Lane wanted to fight a duel with Douglas, who dismissed him with a contemptuous rebuke. Spring, 76–7.

another partisan move. A Committee was appointed to investigate what had happened in that faction-wracked Territory. These investigators were John Sherman of Ohio and William A. Howard of Michigan, Republicans, and Mordecai Oliver of Missouri, Democrat. Oliver was Representative from the district of Missouri in which the border counties were situated.

On April 15, 1856, the Committee began examining witnesses at Lawrence and continued its work in several places in the Territory, in Missouri, on steamboats, in New York, Boston, and Washington. On July 2, Sherman and Howard made the Committee's report. It was frankly partisan. Oliver submitted a bitter dissent, also partisan, yet very plausible. But the majority report was adopted by the House and became the principal Republican campaign document — with one exception.

That exception was a Senate speech by Sumner, entitled 'The Crime against Kansas,' together with the report of the House Committee on the assault which had been committed by a member of the House on the Senator from Massachusetts.

Perhaps no single incident, not vitally important in itself, ever had such effect on public opinion and on the fortunes of a political party, as did the beating of Sumner in the Senate Chamber on the afternoon of May 22, 1856. Possibly it is not far wrong to say that that affair was scarcely less influential in bringing on the Civil War than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or 'Bleeding Kansas' itself.

Few men, so generally disliked by his associates as Sumner, ever served in a legislative body. After two or three years in the Senate many of his colleagues refused to speak to him.[1] Even Wade of Ohio, a bluff, forthright, fighting foe of slavery and the South, did not like the Massachusetts orator.[2] This unfriendly attitude was not caused by Sumner's opinions nor, altogether, by his language in expressing them: other anti-slavery Senators — Hale, Seward, Wade — had struck savage blows at slavery and yet kept on good terms, personally, with their colleagues.

[1] Pierce, III, 300, 437 *n.*

[2] Sumner had become much disliked in the Senate. Even Wade disapproved of him. 'For Wade there was a suspicion of arrogance, a flavor of sham, in the grand assumption of the splendid Sumner. . . . Most men at each interview with him had to tell him who and what they were.' *Life of Benjamin F. Wade:* A. G. Riddle, 209.

But Sumner contrived to irritate opponents. He had a very genius for antagonism, a quality that Lincoln was to encounter. Indeed, with a single physical exception, Lincoln and Sumner were exact opposites in mind, method, body, disposition, and in every characteristic — they were alike only in stature.

Sumner knew that he was able, knew that he was learned, and he was not unaware that he was handsome. Nor did he object to others knowing of his superiority. His voice was deep, sonorous and almost too well modulated; his enunciation clear and precise; his gestures appropriate but studied. He was versed in the classics which he loved to quote, and was an untiring worker. His speeches, although rhetorical and ornate, were full of facts. He was sincere, high-minded, and morally courageous; but he was without the least humility and had no consideration for the feelings or opinions of others. Indeed he seemed to think that anyone who disagreed with him was either a knave or a fool, and probably both.

Such in character was the man who, after routine business on May 19, 1856, rose in his place to address the Senate in the great debate about Kansas. That discussion had been going on for nearly four months. Steadily it had grown more heated.

The Democrats blamed the Emigrant Aid Company and like organizations for having started the trouble; and they branded the doings of the Free State Party as revolutionary and well-nigh treasonable. They condemned the interference of Missouri citizens with elections and affairs in Kansas, but said that it had been done to counteract the equally reprehensible interference of the Emigrant Aid Societies. The Kansas insurgents did not appeal to lawful methods of redress of grievances, asserted the Democrats, but defied law and order with Sharp's rifles in their hands.

The Republicans pointed with horror at the armed and lawless invasion of Kansas by the Border Ruffians of Missouri; there, said Republican Senators and Representatives, was the foul source of all the turbulence and evil that had come upon the Territory. The Emigrant Aid Company and its associates had done right in trying to people Kansas with free laborers who loved liberty and hated bondage. The Free State men were

heroes of a holy cause. They were patriots defending their sacred birthright of freedom. In their hands Sharp's rifles were instruments of heaven — theirs was the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Moreover, Sharp's rifles were the only effective protection of the free emigrants from the bowie knives and guns and cannon of the whisky-soaked demons from Missouri.

In such fashion the battle of words had been fought in Congress for almost a score of weeks. The press had borne to the people every inflammatory word. In spite of the immediate pressure of other questions, that of race often intruded. 'White supremacy,' 'no negro equality' was heard throughout the debate. Although slavery and sectional antagonism were at the bottom of the controversy, it was also sharpened by party politics. The fact requires much repetition that the Presidential campaign was drawing near and that, in Congress, both sides manœuvred for position. Next to Seward, Sumner was the foremost Republican in the Nation.

So stood matters when Sumner spoke. He had prepared with unusual care. His speech was already in type and awaited only proof corrections before being mailed to thousands of addresses over the country. For weeks it had been known that Sumner would speak on May 19, and even some of the things he intended to say had been repeated in general conversation. When the handsome and talented Senator from Massachusetts rose, most Senators were in their places and a big crowd filled the galleries.[1]

Sumner spoke for parts of two days. It was a great oration. Although he added nothing new to the discussion, he marshalled evidence impressively and well. And the speech was dramatic. No circumstance of horror was omitted, no stinging phrase unused. As usual, Sumner indulged in shocking metaphors. The Crime against Kansas 'is the rape of a virgin Territory, compelling it to the hateful embrace of Slavery. . . . *Force* — ay, Sir, FORCE — is openly employed in compelling Kansas to this pollution.' As usual, too, he made display of his learning. Quotations from the classics, from Shakespeare, from Goethe, from Greek and Roman and Norse mythology, from the Bible,

[1] *Works:* Sumner, IV, 130, quoting *New York Evening Post.*

from legal authorities, were mingled with references to ruffians and ruffianism, whisky bottles, artillery, rifles, and bowie knives.

Further, Sumner went out of his way to attack Butler and Douglas personally, and with the extreme of offence. The white-haired Senator from South Carolina was absent on a short visit to his State. Obviously Sumner's assault on him and Douglas had been inserted after the speech was written, for it does not fit into the careful and orderly arrangement of the argument.

From the time he entered the Senate, his Abolition friends in Boston feared that Sumner would be softened by mingling with Southern Senators and the society of the capital, and urged him to be harsh; they now insisted that he use Phillips' policy of personal attack on opponents who were popular and strong.[1] Butler was the best liked, personally, of any man in the Senate, and Douglas was easily the leader of that body. Moreover, Sumner had made a trip through the South in 1855, had been cordially received, especially at Nashville. Then, too, Sumner's condemnation of all who tolerated slave-holders, amounted almost to a pose: 'Nor do I think it easy, hardly possible, for a defender of slavery to be a gentleman. . . . I know no one who in this vile cause does not forget honor, manhood, and manners.' [2] All these things must be taken into account when trying to see why Sumner said what he did about Butler, Douglas, and South Carolina.

Although Butler was not present, said Sumner, he must not lose 'the opportunity of exposing him.' Butler believes himself a chivalrous Knight and of course he has chosen a mistress, 'who, though ugly to others . . . is always . . . chaste in his sight. I mean the harlot Slavery.' Butler would defend her at all

[1] *Works:* Sumner, IV, 127–9. Also Sumner papers, MSS. 'Our men in Congress are too tame. They should . . . crush these fellows into submission.' Le Baron Russell to Sumner, May 11, 1856, etc.

'His friends, I remember, were told that they would find Sumner a man of the world like the rest; "'tis quite impossible to be at Washington and not bend; he will bend as the rest have done."' *Miscellanies:* Emerson, 249.

'He is now what he was put in the Senate to be — a puppet to wire-workers with brains, hunting for plunder; he . . . receives his instructions from them — he does his best to earn their approval.' *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel,* May 24, 1856.

[2] Sumner to the Earl of Carlisle, Oct. 26, 1854. Pierce, III, 405–8.

hazards, said Sumner. 'The frenzy of Don Quixote in behalf of his wench Dulcinea del Toboso is all surpassed.'

And, just as Butler was the Don Quixote, so Douglas was 'the Squire of Slavery, its very Sancho Panza.'

On the second day of his speech, Sumner belabored South Carolina. Again, the attack was not essential to his great argument. Why should Butler exalt South Carolina? 'Pray, Sir, by what title does he indulge in this egotism?' Let Butler remember 'the shameful imbecility' of his State during the Revolution, due to slavery.

'Were the whole history of South Carolina blotted out of existence . . . civilization might lose . . . less than it has already gained by the example of Kansas. . . . Ah, Sir, I tell the Senator that Kansas, welcomed as a Free State, "a ministering angel shall be" to the Republic, when South Carolina, in the cloak of darkness which she hugs, "lies howling."' [1] Sumner said other things equally insulting and equally unnecessary.

When he closed, the venerable Cass of Michigan, oldest of the Senate in service, got slowly upon his feet. 'Mr. President,' he said, 'I have listened with equal regret and surprise to the speech of the honorable Senator from Massachusetts. Such a speech — the most un-American and unpatriotic that ever grated on the ears of the members of this high body — as I hope never to hear again here or elsewhere.' Cass would not make further mention of it, he said, except to correct Sumner's statements about Michigan.

Douglas rose only because of Sumner's personalities, he declared. The argument required no answer — 'we have heard it all before.' It was like an old-fashioned New England bedquilt, made of pieces of discarded dresses and full of 'pretty figures,' but without 'a new piece of material in the whole quilt.'

Sumner's 'classic allusions, each one only distinguished for its lasciviousness and obscenity,' were such as 'respectable colleges . . . suppressed.' At least a hundred times, Sumner had used 'obscene [and] vulgar terms' which reputable men would not re-

[1] For Sumner's whole speech, see *Works:* Sumner, IV, 137–249; *Cong. Globe,* 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 529–44.

peat in decent society. 'It seems that his studies of the classics have all been in those haunts where ladies cannot go, and where gentlemen never read Latin. [Laughter.]'

What did Sumner mean by making such a speech? asked Douglas. Did he want to 'turn the Senate into a bear garden?' Repeatedly Sumner had branded three-fourths of the Senate with infamy and crime. 'How dare he approach one of those gentlemen to give him his hand after that act? . . . He would deserve to have himself spit in the face for doing so.' Was it Sumner's purpose 'to provoke some of us to kick him as we would a dog in the street, that he may get sympathy upon the just chastisement?'

Sumner's offensive words had not been spoken in the heat of debate, said Douglas. For weeks it had been known and talked about, that Sumner 'had his speech written, printed, committed to memory, practiced every night before the glass with a negro boy to hold the candle and watch the gestures, and annoying the boarders in the adjoining rooms until they were forced to quit the House! [Laughter.]' It was said that parts of Sumner's speech, which he had read to friends, had been repeated 'in all the saloons and places of amusement in the city.'

No, exclaimed Douglas, Sumner's charges had not been spontaneous: those libels, the gross insults, had been 'conned over, written with cool, deliberate malignity, repeated from night to night in order to catch the appropriate grace, and then he came here to spit forth that malignity upon men who differ from him — for that is their offense.'

The 'venerable, the courteous, and the distinguished Senator from South Carolina' had been subjected to that 'tirade of abuse' — and in his absence. 'Every Senator who knows him loves him,' testified Douglas. Butler would soon return 'to speak for himself, and to act for himself, too.' But when Butler did come back, Sumner would 'whisper a secret apology in his ear, and ask him to accept that as satisfaction for a public outrage on his character! I know how the Senator from Massachusetts is in the habit of doing those things. I have had some experience of his skill in that respect.'

Gravely and in lofty manner Mason of Virginia added his re-

buke. In the Chamber Senators must submit, of necessity, to associations which they avoided in private life, he said. They were forced to listen 'from sources utterly irresponsible, to language to which no gentleman would subject himself elsewhere.' Sumner did not know what truth was, did not know the quality of 'an honorable mind.' The Senate was compelled to tolerate him, but he was 'one whom to see elsewhere is to shun and despise.'

Boldly Sumner flung back these insults. Douglas was 'a common scold:' let him remember that 'the bowie-knife and bludgeon are not the proper emblems of senatorial debate. . . . The swagger of Bob Acres and the ferocity of the Malay cannot add dignity to this body.' Douglas had made unfounded statements. 'I only brand them to his face as false. I say, also, to that Senator, and I wish him to bear it in mind, that no person with the upright form of man can be allowed — [Hesitation]

'Mr. DOUGLAS: Say it!

'Mr. SUMNER: I will say it — no person with the upright form of man can be allowed . . . to switch out from his tongue the perpetual stench of offensive personality. . . . The noisome, squat, and nameless animal, to which I now refer, is not a proper model for an American Senator. Will the Senator from Illinois take notice?

'Mr. DOUGLAS: I will; and therefore will not imitate you, Sir.

'Mr. SUMNER: Mr. President, again the Senator has switched his tongue, and again he fills the Senate with its offensive odor.'

As to Mason, said Sumner, he only showed 'plantation manners.'

'Manners of which that Senator is unconscious,' retorted Mason.

Douglas had the last word: 'I will only say that a man who has been branded by me in the Senate, and convicted by the Senate of falsehood, cannot use language requiring reply.' [1]

The anti-slavery press acclaimed Sumner's speech as 'masterly,' 'scathing,' 'a combination of oratorical splendors,' 'a solemn, majestic anthem,' a greater than Burke's orations, the

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 544–7.

equal of Webster's noblest efforts.[1] But in Washington it created an angry sensation. Sumner's personal assault on Butler and Douglas, his withering attack on South Carolina, his words and manner, the 'indecency' of his allusions, were the sole topics of conversation. Women were especially severe; at social dinners that night and the next, it was often said that Sumner ought to be thrashed.[2]

In House and Senate there was sullen resentment. Sometimes this ill feeling was expressed in private conversation. In the sixty-seven years of its existence, it was said, no such language had ever before been heard in the Senate. Fiery words had been spoken in heated debates; quarrels and fights had taken place; but never until Sumner delivered his oration had a Senator lashed other Senators with personal abuse carefully prepared long beforehand; and never before had a Senator besmirched the good name of a particular State.

This fact, brought conspicuously forward by what immediately followed, caused the Senate to adopt a new rule: 'No Senator in debate shall refer offensively to any State of the Union.' [3]

Among the members of the House who heard Sumner's assault on South Carolina was a young Representative from that State, Preston Smith Brooks, a distant relative of Senator Butler. Brooks was thirty-six years old, about six feet tall and of robust physique. He was a graduate of the College of South Carolina, had practised law and had served with credit as a captain in the famous 'Palmetto Regiment' during the Mexican War. Thereafter Brooks had devoted himself exclusively to the business of a planter, until he was elected to Congress in 1853.

To the time of the affray which we are now to witness, he had

[1] *Works:* Sumner, IV, 129–31. 'Mr. Sumner has added a cubit to his stature.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 4, 1856.

[2] Pierce, III, 455–60. The account of the Sumner-Brooks affair given in the text, is from the testimony taken by the *House Committee Reports*, III, No. 182, 19–86, and from the various newspaper accounts within the next few days after the incident. Washington Correspondence, *New York Herald*, May 22, in issue May 23; *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, May 27; *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 4; *ib.*, Washington Correspondence of New York *Tribune*, May 22, in issue of May 23; *ib.*, of New York *Times*, May 23, etc.

[3] Sec. 3, Rule XIX. For debate over this and other proposed amendments to the Senate rules, see *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. II, 1477–84.

PRESTON S. BROOKS

borne a singularly good reputation in the capital. He had even won the praise of the *National Era* for courtesy in debate over the Kansas-Nebraska bill, an unusual thing for that official Abolition organ to concede for any slave-holder or Southern man.[1] The *Washington Union* had been ardent in commendation of the young South Carolinian: 'His position as a debater is among the first; and his popularity with men of all parties enables him to be of great service to his constituents.' [2]

The feeling that led Brooks to do what he now did, can be understood only by having clearly in mind the devotion which Southern men had for their States. This love amounted to a passion in those from the older States. Even before the war such sentiment was not realized in the North; to-day it cannot be even comprehended.

In 1856, a Southern man might possibly submit to personal offensiveness, but never to an insult to his State. The two things which, to him, were sacred, were family and State — and State even before family. So Southern men generally were furious over Sumner's speech; and the members from South Carolina took his attack on their State as a personal affront. But it was Brooks who undertook to punish the 'traducer,' because Sumner had also personally assailed his relative as well as his State.

Brooding over the matter, Brooks felt it to be his duty to thrash Sumner, but he did not act at once. Just before Congress opened the day after the speech, he waited in the Capitol grounds for Sumner to come by. Brooks chanced to meet a colleague, Henry A. Edmundston of Virginia, on his way to the House, and asked him to stay and be a witness to what might happen. But Sumner did not come, and the day passed without incident.

[1] 'Mr. Brooks of South Carolina was always a Southern gentleman in . . . his courtesy, in the loftiness of his bearing and in the bitterness and scorn of his denunciations. He is a young gentleman of fine appearance, of good information and of fair elocution and will no doubt acquire practical wisdom with increasing years which, on the subject of slavery, is greatly to be desired.' *National Era*, clipped in *Washington Union*, March 19, 1854.

[2] *Washington Union*, Sept. 10, 1854. Editorial on complaints from South Carolina of Brooks's speech on the Pacific Railway bill. Even Sumner's biographer says that, before the assault, Brooks was 'a modest and orderly member' of the House. 'All agree that he was amiable and friendly.'

On June 21, 1854, Brooks offered a resolution in the House against bringing concealed weapons into the Chamber. Pierce, III, 462.

That night Brooks could not sleep; the next day he was in an ugly and abnormal state of mind. Again he waited for Sumner, this time stationing himself on the terrace overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue and other approaches to the Capitol. Again Edmundston was with him. Again Sumner did not appear. So the two men went to the Capitol; but Brooks went to the Senate Chamber, while Edmundston started for the House.

Both bodies promptly adjourned in respect to the memory of a member of the House who had died on the previous day. Brooks took a seat in the Senate not far from Sumner whose desk was on the back row and second from the center aisle. Two employees of the Senate, a woman, and half a dozen Senators were on the floor. Douglas, Slidell, and two or three others were seated in the cloak room, talking politics. Brooks asked some one to get the woman out of the chamber and this was done.

Brooks had a cane which he always carried. It was gutta-percha, of a type then much affected by gentlemen. In size it was an inch in diameter at the butt, a quarter of an inch narrower at the tip, and it was hollow for three-eighths of an inch from end to end.

Sumner was sitting at his desk, writing. Because of his huge stature, his desk was raised on a platform two or three inches high; and this fact, together with the elevation of each row of desks behind the one in front of it, lifted Sumner's place noticeably above any in the Chamber.

When the woman left, Brooks rose, walked down in front of Sumner's desk and said, speaking in curiously restrained and 'courteous' tones:[1] 'Mr. Sumner, I have read your speech twice, with great care and with as much impartiality as I am capable of and I feel it my duty to say to you that you have published a libel on my State, and uttered a slander upon a relative who is aged and absent, and I am come to punish you.'

Instantly Brooks struck Sumner over the head. Sumner's

[1] 'My attention was first directed by seeing Mr. Brooks address Mr. Sumner in what I supposed to be courteous language. . . . I was surprised to see a South Carolinian address Mr. Sumner in courteous language and that attracted my attention.' Testimony of Warren Winslow, Clerk of Senate, before House Investigating Committee, May 27, 1856. *House Committee Reports*, III, No. 182, 56–7.

long legs were thrust under his desk and, in trying to rise, it was torn from the platform and partially overturned.

Brooks rained blows upon Sumner's head, striking as hard and fast as he could. Sumner was dazed. The cane broke, and, after fifteen or twenty blows, was shattered into fragments. Sumner tried to ward off the strokes and seize the cane. The positions of the two men swiftly changed, and at the end, Sumner fell unconscious in the aisle against a desk two rows to the front and one desk to the left of where the assault began.

The whole thing was over in thirty seconds. As soon as he could reach the spot, Senator Crittenden seized Brooks, who had a cut over the eye. 'I did not wish to hurt him much, but only to whip him,' he exclaimed. When he heard the blows, the assistant doorkeeper, Isaac Holland, a big burly man, rushed forward crying 'I command Peace.' One of Brooks's colleagues, 'Lawrence M. Keitt of South Carolina, with lifted cane, cried, Hands off.' But so swift was the attack and so quickly came the end, that a perfectly clear and precise account could not be had. No one saw the first blow struck. Brooks insisted that it was only a tap given to make Sumner rise; Sumner said that it was so hard that it stunned him. Brooks stopped striking when Sumner fell.

Bleeding and faint, Sumner was helped to an anteroom and a physician called. Besides bruises on head, neck, shoulder, and hand, there were two long cuts and a short one in the scalp, from which blood poured. At first the surgeon said that the wounds were the worst of the kind he ever saw; but the next day he reported that Sumner was not much hurt.[1] Three days later, how-

[1] 'Mr. Sumner has several severe but not dangerous wounds on his head.' Associated Press dispatch in New York *Tribune*, May 23, 1856.

In Court, Brooks said that he was sorry Sumner was not present for he wanted to ask him 'in person' how badly he really was hurt. As to the violence of the first blow, he averred that it 'was but a tap, and intended to put him on his guard. But, sir, he is conveniently and deliberately absent and on travel,' etc. Report Brooks's trial, *Washington Star*, July 9, clipped in New York *Tribune*, July 10, 1856.

Democratic papers and politicians said that Sumner was either imagining that he was hurt or was shamming illness until after the election. *Washington Express*, clipped in *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, July 15, 1856.

All Southern men and women and many in the North, thought that Sumner pretended to be far worse than he was; and this view is held in the South at the present day.

But Sumner was, in fact, badly injured, chiefly from shock to his nervous system. He went to France for treatment and was gone more than two years. Pierce, III, 563–98.

ever, he suffered from pain and fever, caused by suppuration — the doctor had, too soon, closed one of the cuts with collodion.

News of the assault set the North on fire. The rendition of Burns, the turbulence in Kansas, did not have an effect so inflaming. Even conservative men, not unfriendly to the South and not opposed to slavery, shook their heads in despair. Here, said anti-slavery papers and speakers, was a tragic example of Southern spirit, an awful illustration of slave-holder methods. Brooks was pictured as a burly, uncouth bully and coward, creeping upon Sumner from behind, felling him with a bludgeon and then raining murderous blows on a helpless victim.[1]

Throughout the South, on the contrary, the assault was approved and applauded. Sumner had provoked it, and a caning was the least chastisement that could be given him. It was well known that he would not fight, and the law furnished no adequate redress, nor, indeed, any redress at all. Should a vulgarian be permitted to insult a Senator and even a State, and go unwhipped of justice? Should such creatures be licensed to besmirch upright characters and befoul noble records of historic

[1] 'Mr. Sumner was struck unawares over the head by a loaded cane. . . . No meaner exhibition of Southern cowardice . . . was ever witnessed. . . . If, indeed, we go on quietly to submit to such outrages, we deserve to have our noses flattened, our skins blacked,' etc. New York *Tribune*, May 23, 1856.

The *Tribune*, May 24, 1856, printed columns of extracts from the press of the country on the Brooks assault.

The *Illinois State Journal*, June 2, 1856, is typical of the milder comments in anti-slavery papers. 'This is the most direct blow against the freedom of speech ever made in this country. . . .

'Brooks and his southern allies have deliberately adopted the monstrous creed that any man who dares to utter sentiments which they deem wrong or unjust, shall be brutally assailed. . . .

'But on carrying out their ruffianly creed, these men skulk into the Senate Chamber, crouch in a seat near the gentleman whose frank and outspoken words have offended them, and at the moment when he is all unconscious and all unprepared, rush upon him, and with a heavy bludgeon beat him to unconsciousness. . . .

'It was sheer cowardice, and worse than cowardice,' etc.

Many Northern papers, however, while condemning Brooks blamed Sumner for the offensive part of his speech. For example, the *Boston Courier*, an old line Whig and Webster paper said: 'The speech of Mr. Sumner was exceedingly insulting.' Clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 5, 1856. New York *Tribune*, May 26, 1856.

'All parties confess that Sumner's speech surpassed in blackguardism anything ever delivered in the senate. . . . He made a speech against Senator Butler which was never equalled by the lowest pot house slime. . . . The nation will say that Sumner got no more than he deserved. He is a base, lying blackguard, a bully without courage, . . . a provoker of fights,' etc. *Illinois State Register*, May 26, 1856. Also see *Albany* (N.Y.) *Argus* in New York *Tribune*, July 11, 1856.

Commonwealths, and be protected by a misuse of the principle of freedom of speech and debate? Sumner had richly deserved what he got. Let the good work go on. Others ought to be caned, too; it might check their falsehoods and teach them manners.[1]

Thus spoke the Southern press and the Southern people. Brooks became a hero. Many meetings passed resolutions of approval. Canes were presented him by the score. The University of Virginia gave him one.[2] The slaves of Columbia, South Carolina, effusively applauded him and raised 'a handsome subscription' with which to buy a testimonial of their regard.[3]

A Committee of the Senate formally condemned the assault, but said that the Senate had no power to examine or punish the conduct of a Member of the House. Brooks promptly apologized to the Senate and to his colleagues; but the House ordered an investigation which was thoroughly and rigidly made. The majority report urged that Brooks be expelled and Edmundston and Keitt be reprimanded; the minority report insisted that the House had no jurisdiction to inquire into what a member did outside the Chamber. A heated debate took place. Some of the speeches were very bitter. Brooks 'stole into the Senate . . . and smote him as Cain smote his brother,' cried Anson Burlingame of Massachusetts. That State had furnished more Revolution-

[1] 'These vulgar Abolitionists in the Senate . . . have been suffered to run too long without collars. They must be lashed into submission. . . . We trust other gentlemen will follow the example of Mr. Brooks. . . . If need be, let us have a caning or cowhiding every day.' *Richmond Enquirer*, June 2, clipped in New York *Tribune*, June 3, 1856. Also *Richmond Enquirer*, June 9, in *Tribune*, June 11, 1856.

'Skulking behind the chivalrous code of non-combatancy, which he and his foul-mouthed fraternity have established for their insolent licentiousness, . . . he [Sumner] . . . violently outraged even the ordinary decencies of common life, by the employment of language which would have been offensive to the lowest society of either man or woman! . . . It seems there are no rules of the Senate . . . to punish the offender. . . . *What is to be done?* Nothing in this wide world but to cowhide bad manners *out* of him, or good manners *into* him,' etc. *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, May 27, 1856. Italics *Sentinel's*.

'Although Mr. Brooks ought to have selected some other spot for the altercation than the Senate chamber, if he had broken every bone in Sumner's carcass it would have been but a just retribution upon this slanderer of the South and her individual citizens.' *Petersburg Intelligencer*, clipped in *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, May 29, 1856.

[2] New York *Tribune*, June 12, 1856.

[3] The *South Carolinian*, clipped in *St. Louis Evening News* and reprinted in *Illinois Weekly State Journal*, June 11, 1856.

ary soldiers than the whole South.[1] Thereafter both Northern and Southern men went to the House fully armed.[2]

The Massachusetts Legislature passed angry resolutions. Thus, said Hunter of Virginia, Massachusetts converted 'a personal dispute into the magnitude of a public quarrel;' of the many previous encounters because of debates in Congress, the Sumner-Brooks affair was the first in which a State interposed. The result was to inflame sectional strife, which ought to be appeased since the States were all one family.[3] Seward declared that Brooks's doctrine was the same as that of Comanches and Sioux, that the Massachusetts resolutions were proper, but that no verbal assault should be made on any State. Butler said that if he should get whipped in a personal encounter, South Carolina would not hold 'indignation meetings.'[4]

In the House the vote on the resolutions to expel Brooks was strictly partisan; the necessary two-thirds could not be had, and the resolution of expulsion was not adopted. Brooks made a defiant speech and resigned.[5] As he walked from the House, Southern women hugged and kissed him.[6] In his district he was reëlected by a unanimous vote.

Incalculable impetus was given the Republican Party by the Sumner assault. Every blow of Brooks's cane made myriads of Republican votes. Opponents of slavery extension, hitherto divided on other questions, began to unite.[7]

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 653–6. June 21, 1856. Burlingame's speech was bellicose and deliberately insulting. Brooks challenged him; Burlingame accepted and named rifles as weapons and Canada as the place. Brooks declined to go through the North on the ground that he would be mobbed. Pierce, III, 493.

[2] Washington Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, May 23, 27, 29, in issues May 24, 28, June 3, 1856.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 656–61, June 24, 1856.

[4] *Ib.*, 661–5. [5] *Ib.*, 831–3.

[6] Pierce, III, 491. Keitt stoutly defended his colleague: it was, he said, the 'sanctity of character on one side, and impunity to slander on the other.' Butler's name was 'interwoven' with South Carolina's history and his 'family escutcheon is bound with laurels won on many a field.' Then Keitt, too, resigned. *Ib.*, 833–9.

[7] The House ordered to be printed 100,000 copies of the majority report with Sumner's speech annexed. James L. Orr of South Carolina said that it was 'intended as an electioneering document for the Republican party.' It was part of a 'systematic effort to mislead and inflame the public mind of the North.' *Ib.*, 805–9, July 19, 1856.

This pamphlet was the principal, and by far the most effective Republican campaign document of 1856.

Nearly two years had elapsed since the historic meeting under the oaks at Jackson, Michigan. Already most of those who were to become national leaders of the party had rallied to its banner. In October, 1855, Seward finally had taken his stand, made his great Buffalo and Albany Republican speeches, and, by common consent, had become the national Republican chieftain.

But Lincoln had remained out of it. Always slow to make up his mind about anything, always doubtful of new expedients and inclined to oppose novel devices, he had not accepted the Republican Party. During the summer and fall of 1855 earnest efforts had been made to strengthen it in Illinois. Giddings, Codding, Lovejoy, and other Republican leaders had worked hard to that end.[1]

Seemingly it was a good time to get recruits. The Know-Nothings were losing favor. In June Logan had been defeated for the Supreme Court, largely because, when trying to elect Lincoln to the Senate, he had worked with the Know-Nothings. He was, said Lincoln, 'worse beaten than any other man ever was since elections were invented.' [2] A Know-Nothing mob had howled down Governor Wise of Virginia when he was trying to make a speech in Washington — almost an exact repetition of Douglas's experience in Chicago a few months earlier. Life had been taken in a Know-Nothing riot in Cincinnati. In Louisville a ferocious outburst had occurred — nearly a score of foreign-born citizens were killed as the result of a Know-Nothing election disturbance, and blocks of houses were burned.[3]

[1] Joshua R. Giddings 'has been perambulating the northern sections of the state with the Rev. Ichabod Codding, organizing the Republican party, . . . a nigger-stealing, stinking, putrid, abolition party.' *St. Clair Weekly Tribune*, Oct. 6, 1855. *Joliet Signal*, Sept. 18, 1855.

'We in Illinois are now just commencing a systematic organization of Republicanism. . . . In this part or central portion of the State we are backward, timid and cowardly.' Herndon to Theodore Parker, Oct. 30, 1855. Newton, 82.

[2] Lincoln to Whitney, June 7, 1855. Weik MSS.

In Springfield Logan was beaten by a majority of 228. *Illinois State Register*, June 5, 1855; and in the District by 9,890. *Ib.*, June 23. It was fully expected that he would win.

'The people of Sangamon have put their fist upon the midnight plotters. . . . Judge Logan's affiliation with that faction last winter in the Legislature is repudiated.' *Ib.*, June 6, July 16, 1855.

[3] *Louisville Journal*, Aug. 7, clipped in *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, Aug. 11, 1855; New York *Tribune*, Aug. 8, 11, 13, 1855; New York *Times*, Aug. 10, 1855; *New*

Alarmed by the apparent beginning of the decline of their cause, the Know-Nothings held many meetings and 'conventions' throughout Illinois. Obstinate, pugnacious, and as fanatically sincere as either Abolitionists or the champions of slavery themselves, the Know-Nothings of 1855 stubbornly clung to their organization. Most of them had been Whigs, and while they were weakening, as a party, they still were the decisive force in the politics of the times.

Under these circumstances Lovejoy urged Lincoln to come out for 'fusion' [Republican Party]. Lincoln refused — the success of any combination required that the Know-Nothings join it, he said. They were still powerful around Springfield and many of them were his 'old political and personal friends.' He was as much against their principles as he was against those of slavery extension, he said; but no political merger could win without the Know-Nothings.[1]

Soon after his letter to Lovejoy, Lincoln wrote Speed that he did not know to what party he belonged, if to any — that was 'a disputed point.

'I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs, and that I am an Abolitionist. . . . I now do no more than oppose the extension of slavery. I am not a Know-nothing; that is certain. How could I be? How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that "all men are created equal!" We now practically read it "all men are created equal, except negroes." When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read "all men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics." When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty, — to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.' [2]

York Herald, Aug. 9, 1855, printed comments of German, French, and other American papers on the Louisville riots. The riot was started by the 'foreigners' because they were forcibly kept from voting, which they always had been permitted to do before this particular municipal election.

[1] Lincoln to Lovejoy, Aug. 11, 1855. Tracy, 59–60.

[2] Lincoln to Speed, Aug. 24, 1855. *Works*, II, 281–7.

Yet, for reasons given Lovejoy two weeks before he wrote to Speed, Lincoln did not denounce the Know-Nothings publicly.

Another circumstance had effect on Lincoln. To stop Democratic defection and get the support of the 'national' Whigs, Douglas had made a speaking tour of Illinois. On his trail went Trumbull, and sometimes Lincoln also made answer to the 'Little Giant.' [1] So untiring and fierce was Douglas's energy that, in spite of his well-nigh abnormal physical strength, his power showed signs of breaking; for he was often sick.[2]

The burden of Douglas's speeches was defence of popular sovereignty; attack on the Emigrant Aid Company and its Sharp's rifles-policy; assertion that the Republican Party represented all the 'isms,' was purely sectional, would cause disunion and perhaps civil war; [3] that the Whig Party was gone and that the Democratic Party was the only national political organization left in the field. The charge that the Republican Party was sectional and would force the South to secede became the outstanding issue of the coming Presidential campaign, and it profoundly affected Lincoln's course, both before and after he joined the new party.

So while national, State, and local leaders had striven to advance the Republican cause in Illinois and throughout the country, Lincoln had held aloof. Indeed, if we may judge by what the *Illinois State Journal* said, he resisted efforts to form the new party, for that paper attacked the movement in repeated editorials. These continued to appear until a short time before the famous Bloomington Convention which met on May 29, 1856.[4]

[1] Herndon to Theodore Parker, Oct. 30, 1855. Newton, 82–4. Herndon says that Douglas showed 'power of a peculiar nature . . . energy, duplicity and dexterity, driven by an abandon fired by rum.'

[2] Shields came back to Illinois and helped Douglas on the stump. In a speech at Springfield he declared that popular sovereignty assured freedom in Kansas and that because of the working of that principle '*no man would ever see another slave Territory on this continent,*' even if we acquired the whole of it to the Isthmus of Darien. *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel,* Jan. 3, 1856. Italics *Sentinel's.*

[3] 'In 1860 comes the real struggle between the North and South. . . . I think not before.' Theodore Parker to Herndon, Nov. 30, 1855. Newton, 84–5.

[4] 'The Journal will continue . . . opposed to fanaticism and extreme views.' *Illinois Journal,* July 11, 1855.

For several weeks, however, Lincoln had been gradually tending toward the new party; yet his obstinate mind yielded slowly. That he had not before gone into it was characteristic — and in Illinois, was wise. But political developments in the Nation were progressing as logically and rapidly as the course of events in Kansas. Lincoln could not much longer keep his uncertain stand. As usual, he reacted with the public, and we shall presently hear him express the emotion now raging throughout the North.[1]

Washington's birthday, 1856, was an important date in the history of the Republican Party and a decisive point in Lincoln's political life. On that day, at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, the new party was organized on a national basis, and a nominating Convention called to meet at Philadelphia, June 17, 1856.[2] An intolerably long Address was issued; [3] it was almost entirely

'Patriotic men cannot be too careful how they sympathize with or lend their influence to mere sectional parties.' *Illinois Journal*, July 17, 1855.

'There is a manifest effort at the present time to swallow up the old line Whigs, in this Republican party . . . and transfer them from their broad, tried and national platform to a single plank.' *Ib.*, Aug. 4, 1855.

'The antecedents of neither Mr. Giddings nor Mr. Codding are such as to recommend them to the conservative . . . portion of the community.' *Ib.*, Sept. 26, 1855.

The Republican party 'can by no possibility do any good — it may be the means of great evil.' *Ib.*, Oct. 5, 1855.

'The so-called Republican party . . . is so intensely sectional, that its existence could not be continued with safety to the Union.' *Ib.*, Nov. 15, 1855.

'The people . . . will not countenance or uphold a merely sectional party.' *Ib.*, Nov. 21, 1855.

'The . . . Republican leaders in Illinois . . . must see the utter hopelessness of any attempt to cut loose entirely from the Whigs or Americans [Know-Nothings]. . . . The Republican party of Illinois can even now command but a very small fraction of voters and those only of the most ultra views. Before another six months, we believe, it will be entirely without rank and file.' *Ib.*, Nov. 30, 1855.

'The Whig party has always been in its broadest sense an American Party. . . . To make a successful opposition to the Democracy the Know Nothings must move forward to this old Whig ground.' *Ib.*, Dec. 19, 1855.

'Should the next Presidential election go into the House of Representatives, the balance of power will . . . rest with the Americans [Know-Nothings] and Whigs.' *Ib.*, Dec. 21, 1855.

[1] Herndon, II, 382. 'He must be a Democrat, Know-Nothing, Abolitionist, or Republican, or forever float about in the great political sea without compass, rudder, or sail. At length he declared himself.'

[2] The Pittsburg Republican conference was dominated by radicals. Among the delegates from Illinois were Lovejoy, Codding, and John H. Bryant, brother of William Cullen Bryant. Oliver P. Morton was a delegate from Indiana. New York *Times*, Feb. 26, 1856.

[3] New York *Tribune*, Feb. 25, 1856.

on Kansas,[1] and this address in substance became the Republican platform in the Presidential campaign of that year. In the evening the convention went in a body to a Kansas Aid meeting.[2]

On the same day that the Republicans met at Pittsburg, the Know-Nothing or American Party held its National Convention at Philadelphia. The majority were for adopting the regular Know-Nothing platform and nominating party candidates for the impending Presidential campaign. Delegates who were against slavery extension insisted that the Party declare itself on that subject, and they opposed making nominations at once. But a majority of nearly three to one decided to go ahead.[3] So they reaffirmed the party creed and nominated Fillmore and Andrew Jackson Donelson of Tennessee.[4]

When they found that they could not have their way, the minority of the Know-Nothings, which included delegates from New England, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Iowa, withdrew from the Convention,[5] and soon afterwards these insurgents nominated John C. Frémont, by birth of Georgia, but named from California, and William F. Johnston of Pennsylvania as their candidates. Most of these seceding, or independent, Know-Nothings afterwards turned up as active and influential delegates to the Republican Convention at Philadelphia.[6]

At bottom, the cause of the disruption of the Know-Nothing Party was disagreement about Kansas. The fight for freedom in Kansas was the immediate force which directed political

[1] Lovejoy made a war speech — he wanted to go to Kansas as a private soldier. New York *Times*, Feb. 23, 1856.

[2] *Ib.*, Feb. 25, 1856. [3] McKee, 100. [4] The adopted son of President Jackson.

[5] Thomas Spooner of Ohio, a delegate to the Know-Nothing gathering at Philadelphia, telegraphed the Republicans at Pittsburg: 'Americans [Know-Nothings] are with you. Raise the Republican banner.' New York *Times*, Feb. 23, 1856.

[6] The Know-Nothing nominating Convention came at the end of a four-day session of the National Council during which dissension constantly grew. Justice John McLean of the Supreme Court, Senators Houston of Texas, and Garrett Davis of Kentucky also received votes as the party's candidate for President.

A resolution by a New York delegate proposed to eject Thomas H. Ford of Ohio, because Ford was 'now in conference with the Black Republican and Foreign Party.'

For full account of the Know-Nothing proceedings at Philadelphia, see New York *Times*, Feb. 19–26, 1856, inclusive.

movements throughout the North and gave new life to the Republican Party. The assault on Sumner was the throwing of oil upon combustible material already burning. But for 'Bully Brooks' and the 'Border Ruffians' the new party would have made little headway.

On the very day the Republicans had organized at Pittsburg and the Know-Nothings had met at Philadelphia, a little band of Illinois 'anti-Nebraska' editors assembled at Decatur to organize for the 'coming contest.' [1] The meeting was called by a young man of thirty-one, Paul Selby, editor of the *Morgan Journal* of Jacksonville.[2] Two years earlier, he had helped organize the Republican Party at the Springfield Convention,[3] to escape which Lincoln left town.

Lincoln came over from Springfield, seemingly to keep extreme statements out of the 'platform.' At any rate he was in touch all day with the committee, and Selby tells us that the resolutions bear 'the stamp of his peculiar intellect.' [4] So, in practical effect this 'Decatur platform' merely opposed the extension of slavery.

One of the editors, George Schneider of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, insisted upon a moderate anti-Know-Nothing plank. This 'raised a storm of opposition,' but Lincoln said that it was nothing new, since it was in the Declaration of Independence, and that a new party could not be built on 'proscriptive principles.' [5] To make sure of the German vote, it was put in.[6] Although a plank on State matters was adopted, all reference to prohibition was prudently avoided.[7] A committee was appointed to call a State Convention. On this committee was Herndon, Gillespie, and Koerner — an Abolitionist Whig, a Know-Nothing Whig, and a German Democrat. The word 'Republican' was left out of the call.[8]

The convention was held in the parlor of the Cassell House [9]

[1] *Era:* Cole, 143.

[2] Selby's statement in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 34–5. [3] *Ib.*, 43–7.

[4] Selby, 37. [5] Schneider's statement. *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 88–9.

[6] *Era:* Cole, 144.

[7] The platform of the 'Anti-Nebraska Editorial Convention' was published in full in the *Quincy Whig*, Feb. 28, 1856. A few other anti-Nebraska papers also printed it.

[8] *Era:* Cole, 144–5. [9] Now called the St. Nicholas Hotel.

and that night the delegates were given a banquet. Several speeches were made, the principal one by Lincoln. As usual, he was amusing, and, as usual, wise. Not being an editor, he said, he felt like the ugly man riding through a wood who met a woman, also on horseback. She stopped and said:

'Well, for land sake, you are the homeliest man I ever saw.'

'Yes, madam, but I can't help it,' said he.

'No, I suppose not,' she observed, 'but you might stay at home.' [1]

An editor had proposed that Lincoln be made the candidate for Governor. No! said Lincoln, it would not do to have an old line Whig like himself at the head of the ticket; an anti-Nebraska Democrat would be 'more available' for that place. Col. William H. Bissell was the man to lead the fight.[2]

But the *State Journal* approved the Decatur platform as being neither Republican nor Know-Nothing.[3] For several weeks Lincoln showed no further interest in the matter. Instead, he went on riding the circuit and let political events take their course.

The eager Herndon, however, was enthusiastic, although, he said cryptically, the new party must 'regard the constitution.' [4] Still, 'Resistance to Tyrants is obedience to God,' he exclaimed.[5] As we have seen, he had joined the Republican Party, when it was formed in Springfield on October 5, 1854, under the leadership of Lovejoy and Codding. Some of the editors at the Decatur meeting were also members; but, while that Party, as a State organization, had been in existence in Illinois for nearly a year and a half, nobody but anti-slavery extremists had had anything to do with it.

Now the time had come when its membership might be broadened and fusion effected with other groups, such as the Know-

[1] B. F. Shaw in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 68. [2] Selby, 39.

[3] Feb. 25, 1856, as quoted in *Era:* Cole, 144. On the other hand the *Rockford Republican*, March 19, 1856, said: 'There is not a plank in the platform but what is made of sound-live-oak Republican timber.' The *State Journal* had broken with Herndon or he with it, over the Know-Nothing question. 'I have nothing to do with it now, nor for months.' Herndon to Theodore Parker, April 28, 1856. Newton, 91–2. A new editor had taken charge, but Lincoln's intimacy appears to have continued.

[4] Herndon to Trumbull, March 8, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[5] Same to same, March 28, 1856. *Ib.*

Nothings. As Lincoln had told Lovejoy, the adherence of those men was indispensable to the success of any combination against the Democrats. But the radicals insisted that there could be 'no middle ground.' [1] And there were the Germans to be considered, too; the Bloomington resolutions must oppose Know-Nothingism, wrote the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* to Trumbull.[2]

To no one except Herndon was the outlook rosy. Bissell thought that few would go to the Bloomington meeting except the Decatur coterie that called it; 'nominations by such a convention are but the surest modes of killing off the nominees. . . . The anti-Nebraska Democrats ought to have rallied and taken control and direction of this Bloomington Convention.' Had that been done, Bissell might have accepted the nomination for Governor; but as things were he did not see any 'inducement to mix myself up with them.' [3] Judd wrote Trumbull that but for Know-Nothingism 'we could get McIllroy Egan and that set of Irishmen.' The prospects were that the Kansas 'excitement' would continue; 'and our Democrats want a Democrat nominated.' [4]

Finally Herndon drew up a call for a meeting of those in Sangamon County who favored 'the Policy of Washington and Jefferson,' [5] to select delegates to the Bloomington Convention. Lincoln was absent on the circuit. Herndon signed his name at the head of the list.[6] When some of the old line Whigs saw it in the *State Journal*, they were dismayed. Stuart 'rushed' to Herndon and asked if 'Lincoln had signed that Abolition call.'

'No,' answered Herndon.

'Did Lincoln authorize you to sign it?' persisted Stuart.

'No,' admitted Herndon.

'Then you have ruined him,' exclaimed the angry Stuart.

[1] John H. Bryant, Princeton, Ill., to Trumbull, March 24, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] C. H. Ray to Trumbull, May 11, 1856. *Ib.*

[3] Bissell to Trumbull, May 5, 1856. *Ib.*

[4] Judd to Trumbull, May 15, 1856. *Ib.*

Continuance of the 'Kansas excitement' was thought to be necessary to Republican success. 'We have no doubt it will continue so till after the Presidential election.' J. S. P., 'Special Correspondent' of the New York *Tribune*, at Washington, May 28, in issue June 2, 1856.

[5] *Illinois State Journal*, May 14, 1856.

[6] One hundred and twenty-nine names were signed to the call. *Ib.*

Herndon wrote Lincoln that the matter was causing 'a stir' among his old Whig friends; did Lincoln approve or disapprove of what Herndon had done?

The telegraph wires were crackling with stories of the assault on Sumner and of renewed violence in Kansas. Lincoln answered Herndon: 'All right; go ahead. Will meet you — radicals and all.' [1]

At last, on the day of the meeting, the *State Journal* came out sturdily for the movement.[2] 'Just as we have predicted,' sneered the *State Register;* 'the sore-head democrats have united with some of the black republican leaders . . . to draw into their ranks a portion of the old line whigs.' [3]

On May 24, 1856, two days after the Brooks attack on Sumner in the Senate Chamber, Sangamon County delegates to Bloomington were chosen. Among them were both Lincoln and Herndon. But, said the junior partner, speaking the sentiment of his senior, the convention must be conservative — such men as Lincoln, Browning, and some sound Democrats must draft the platform.[4] The fact that Lincoln and others like him had promised to attend, encouraged those who were trying to make the gathering 'as respectable as possible.' [5] Herndon spoke in Sangamon and adjacent counties, 'trying to stir up MEN' — let Trumbull send him the worst pro-slavery speeches he could find. The Bloomington affair would be 'quite conservative,' he optimistically prophesied.[6] He was doing his best, '"shoving" along the young men to have a good attendance.' [7]

Such were the circumstances under which Lincoln finally cast his fortunes with the Republican Party, which, however, those who were forming it anew in Illinois did not yet call by that name. We now shall go with him through the historic campaign of 1856. It was a contest in which sectional lines were finally drawn, and drawn in militant fashion, and the dissolution of the Union was made all but certain.

[1] Herndon, II, 382–3. [2] May 23, 1856.

[3] *Illinois State Register,* May 23, 1856.

[4] Herndon to Trumbull, April 24, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[5] George T. Brown, editor *Quincy Whig,* to Trumbull, May 12, 1856. *Ib.*

[6] Herndon to Trumbull, May 17, 1856. *Ib.*

[7] Same to same, April 24, 1856. *Ib. Illinois State Journal,* May 12, 1856.

CHAPTER VI

REPUBLICAN ADVANCE: WHIG REVOLT

The Republican Party is founded on freedom and law. It is as broad as the Constitution. SEWARD, May, 1856.

There is merit in the Republican Party. It is this. It is the first sectional party ever organized in this country. . . . It is the North against the South. WENDELL PHILLIPS, June, 1856.

If the South could and did force on the North an exclusively Southern administration, would we submit? Not for a moment. FILLMORE, July, 1856.

If the Republican party wins, I turn my eyes from the consequences. To the South, that government will appear an alien government, a hostile government. RUFUS CHOATE, August, 1856.

The election of Frémont would sound the knell of the Union. Could the South accept a purely sectional rule, a domination solely by the North? Never! TOOMBS, September, 1856.

This government would be very weak indeed if a majority with a disciplined army and navy and a well-filled treasury, could not preserve itself when attacked by an unarmed, undisciplined, unorganized minority. All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, . . . We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not. LINCOLN, August, 1856.

THE weather was very hot in Illinois during the last week of May, 1856. In a room with tobacco bespattered walls and bare floor covered with dirt from the farmers' boots, Davis, fat and bulky, without coat, vest, or collar, was holding court at Danville. Among the lawyers before him, all clad as thinly as the Judge, was Lincoln.

The talk was of Kansas, Sumner, and politics more than of legal disputes and cases to be tried. The Bloomington Convention was at hand and everyone was interested in what it would do. Davis did not think it important enough to adjourn Court. But he told Lincoln to stop at his house while in Bloomington, with two or three mutual friends of Lincoln's choosing.

On May 27 Lincoln left Danville for the convention. Wearing his long, sweat-stained linen duster and tall battered hat, in his hand his old umbrella tied with a string, he walked along the two boards which, end to end, nailed to crosspieces of wood on the earth, constituted the sidewalk. Behind Lincoln came young Whitney, who went with his hero. At the station they boarded

the train which was pulled out by one of the little engines of that day, with much snorting, sparks from the burning wood in the fire-box flying from the bulging and expansive smoke-stack.

They had to go by Decatur, and were joined at Urbana by J. O. Cunningham, editor of the *Urbana Union*. A few others, too, 'mostly young men,' went from that town and Danville; for during Court at those places Lincoln had striven to arouse interest in the convention and to get as many to attend it as he could.[1]

The party reached Decatur in mid-afternoon and, since there was no train to Bloomington before the next morning, they stayed at Decatur all night. To Lincoln the outlook was gloomy. Two weeks before he had been jubilant; he had told his partner that, while on the circuit, he had been testing the public mind and, although in Springfield 'some few corrupt old line whigs who were gaping for office' might join the Democrats, men of both parties in the country were all right and 'becoming more so every day.' Herndon reported this good news to Trumbull, and added that he had never seen Lincoln 'so sanguine of success. . . . HE IS WARM.'[2]

But now Lincoln was not so sure, and frankly said so, as he, Whitney, and Cunningham strolled about town and out into the woods near by, where they sat on a log and talked. Coming back to the hotel, Lincoln grew reminiscent and showed his friends 'the exact spot . . . right in front of the Court House,' where, twenty-six years earlier, the Hanks and Lincoln families had halted their wagon on their long journey to a new abode.[3]

On the way to Bloomington, next morning, few persons were in the coach where Lincoln, Whitney, and Cunningham rode, the only car not filled with tobacco smoke. Lincoln was uneasy — where were the delegates to the Convention? He was particularly nervous lest none at all should come from the south part

[1] 'Old Major Hall Convention:' J. O. Cunningham in (Bloomington, Ill.) *Daily Bulletin*, Feb. 4, 1909. Also Cunningham, in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 91.

[2] Herndon to Trumbull, May 20, 1856. Trumbull MSS. Capitals Herndon's. A week before the Bloomington Convention anti-Nebraska 'mass meetings' became numerous. *Quincy Whig*, May 24, 1856.

[3] Whitney, 74.

of the State which, with Central Illinois, was the stronghold of old line Whigs who were standing by their party. Lincoln went forward, made inquiry, and came back beaming: he had found two delegates from the lower counties; [1] one of them was Jesse K. Dubois of Lawrence County,[2] sour and reluctant, but on his way.

At Bloomington, Lincoln, Archibald Williams, his old associate in the Legislature, T. Lyle Dickey of Ottawa, a good lawyer and a leading Whig, and Whitney, went to Davis's house, and lived there during the Convention.[3] Lincoln and Williams slept in one bed and Dickey and Whitney in another. All were Whigs and conservatives, and all were skilled politicians. The Judge's residence was half a mile from town, and the feverish excitement of the crowds did not reach that tranquil spot. It was an ideal place for calm thought and cool judgment; and Whitney tells us that the course of the historic Bloomington Convention was decisively influenced by the counsels that came from the steady men in the Davis house.[4]

After the noonday meal, Whitney went with Lincoln to the Chicago and Alton depot, to see what delegates would come from Chicago. On the way they stopped at a jewelry shop and Lincoln bought his first spectacles. They cost thirty-seven and a half cents. He was forty-seven years old, he told his young companion, and 'kinder needed' the glasses.[5] At the railway station several delegates got off the train. Among them was Judd.

'That's the best sign yet,' Lincoln whispered to Whitney. 'Judd is there; and he's a trimmer.' [6]

That night the public square rang with speeches, most of them full of fury, made in front of the Pike House.[7] The crowd called on Lincoln. He told a story or two, gave his old illustration of the destruction of the imaginary fence between his field and John Calhoun's field which was filled with hungry cattle, denounced the outrages in Kansas, bewailed the treatment of

[1] Whitney, 74–5.
[2] Cunningham, 92.
[3] Whitney, 73.
[4] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 259.
[5] Whitney, 75.
[6] *Ib.*
[7] *Chicago Daily Democratic Press,* May 30, 1856.

Delahay, and said that he had prepared a speech which he would make at the Convention.[1]

The assemblage at Bloomington was a mixed gathering. It was made up of groups which were suspicious of one another — well-nigh antagonistic, indeed — and had nothing in common except opposition to the extension of slavery, hostility to the National Administration, and hatred of Douglas. The problem was to get them to act together and keep on acting together. Former Democrats like Judd and Palmer were so angry at Douglas that they were willing to go to any lengths; conservative Whigs like Williams, Browning, and Lincoln, were cautious and hesitant; others like Dubois, were doubtful and sullen; radicals like Lovejoy and Codding were for extreme measures; the Germans asked for recognition and a mild disavowal of Know-Nothingism.

The Democratic State Convention, held four weeks earlier, had made support of the Kansas-Nebraska Act the test of party fealty and nominated for Governor Representative William A. Richardson, Douglas's most efficient friend in the Illinois delegation in Congress. These acts had released anti-Nebraska Democrats like Judd and Palmer from further allegiance to the party.[2] But far more important as a rallying cry, was the fact that the Union was again in danger.

More and more the Fugitive Slave Law was being flouted in the North, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which most Southern men had supported as 'a measure of peace,' was being savagely assailed with greater determination than ever, organized sectional effort was being put forth to make Kansas a free State. All these and many other things showed, said the Southern press and spokesmen, that the South must set up for itself. Once more disunion sentiment in that section became as strong as it had been before the Great Compromise, and the hardening determination of the Southern people to form a separate Government of their own was stated with utmost frankness.[3]

[1] *Illinois State Register*, May 31, 1856.

[2] *Era:* Cole, 145.

[3] 'Unless the Great Ruler of the nations shall interpose and stay the hand of northern fanatics and traitors, the issue may be presented to us: Either the Union, with the loss of $1,200,000,000. of property, with an inferior race of three or four millions turned loose

Again Rhett's paper, the *Charleston Mercury*, led the secession movement in the South. Herndon took that paper, he wrote to Trumbull: 'it "foams"' at the Pittsburg Republican manifesto; 'I see the feelings of the South in this disunion sheet;' but, continued Lincoln's partner, 'some of the wind needs to be taken out of the bloat,' and under a bold stand by the Republican Party the South would back down like a blustering but cowardly schoolboy.[1] Yet, as we shall see, a strong but despairing national feeling still persisted in that section.

In Bloomington radical sentiment ran high.[2] On the morning of the Convention, the Chicago papers came with hideous details of 'the sack of Lawrence,' by the 'Border Ruffians' and their accomplices in deviltry, the military hordes from the South. The Free-State Hotel had been destroyed by cannon and fire, houses robbed, patriot arms seized, defenceless men, women and children insulted, abused, and turned destitute upon the streets of their ravaged and ruined town.

Coming on top of highly colored accounts of Brooks's assault on Sumner, these tidings from Kansas inflamed delegates and visitors to fighting wrath. And Sumner was dying, said another rumor.[3] 'Dreadful news from Kansas. My God, what is to be the result?' a worker for the new party wrote to Trumbull.[4]

Lovejoy and Codding made the most of the excitement. Several Free-State men from Kansas were there and one woman, Robinson's wife. The news of the morning was that the 'Governor' had just been arrested without warrant and was, at that moment, 'chained out on the prairie, in default of a jail,'[5] a story typical of the times. Among the Kansans who had come to Bloomington for the Republican Convention were the best

among us to riot without restraint, or a dissolution of the Union with all the horrors that may attend it.' *DeBow's Review*, xx, 561 (June, 1856).

[1] Herndon to Trumbull, Feb. 15, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] *Chicago Democratic Press*, May 30, 1856. [3] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 259.

[4] A. Jonas, Quincy, Ill., to Trumbull, May 26, 1856. Trumbull MSS. The Kansas and Sumner outrages arouse 'our men' fearfully. George T. Brown to Trumbull, June 3, 1856. *Ib.*

[5] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 259.

agitators from that Territory who were touring the North — the best except Lane, then on his way to Chicago, where, two nights after the Convention, he was to make an almost unbelievably dramatic and effective speech.

Chief of these Kansas orators at Bloomington, was Reeder. He was 'a lion to the multitude, but no lion to Lincoln,' who disliked and 'was deeply prejudiced against him.' Reeder made a frenzied speech to a big crowd in the Court House square. It was the same that he had been making and continued to make all over the free States. Murder, battle, and sudden death, dripped from every sentence, but he said nothing about his town-site speculation at Pawnee.[1]

Lincoln would not listen to Reeder, did not meet him. Whitney, Williams, and Lincoln chanced to pass when Reeder was speaking. For the moment they stopped.

'He can't overcome me,' said Williams.

'Nor me,' exclaimed Lincoln; 'he would have to do a great deal to overcome my prejudice against him.'[2] Delahay had kept Lincoln informed from Kansas, of what had been done there.

But it looked as though the extremists would control the Convention and pass extravagant resolutions. If they did, the conservative Whigs would not join the new party. They were none too eager in any case; and, as we shall soon see, tens of thousands of them refused to do so. Lincoln was determined that the radicals should not have their way. That they did not, was largely due to his cooling advice and skilful guidance. 'If rash and ultra councils prevail, all is lost,' Browning had informed Trumbull.[3] On the other hand, a New York radical who had been in Illinois expressed the feeling of his fellow extremists in that State: Those who refused to help Kansas 'ought to be hanged for treason;' thousands say 'give us a northern

[1] Cunningham says that Reeder's speech was 'moderate and not denunciatory, . . . only delineating the violence he had witnessed and suffered.' *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 92. But Reeder's set speech which was published as a campaign document, was full of such expressions as, the Free State people in Kansas were worse off than 'Russian Serfs'; members of the Legislature and the territorial officials were 'robbers, house-burners, highwaymen, ravishers, and murderers,' etc.

[2] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 261.

[3] Browning to Trumbull, May 19, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

confederacy. . . . The Union is not worth preserving. Let the South take care of themselves.' [1]

In a talk with Judd and other anti-Douglas Democrats, Lincoln stated the situation; 'Your party is so mad at Douglas for wrecking his party that it will gulp down anything; but our party [Whig] is fresh from Kentucky and must not be forced to radical measures; the Abolitionists will go with us anyway, and your wing of the Democratic party the same, but the Whigs hold the balance of power and will be hard to manage, anyway. Why, I had a hard time to hold Dubois when he found Lovejoy and Codding here; he insisted on going home at once.' [2]

The Convention met in the largest room in Bloomington, known as Major's Hall. It was on the second floor of a two-story brick building just off the Court-House square. Williams, old line Whig, was made temporary chairman and Palmer, anti-Nebraska Democrat, permanent chairman.[3] The Hall was densely packed with delegates and spectators, all expectant and excited, most of the delegates burning with enthusiasm. But an ominous fact justified Lincoln's fear that the south part of the State would not respond to the call — about thirty southern counties sent no delegates.[4]

It had long been agreed on all hands that a Democrat must head the ticket and a German be given the second place upon it. For weeks the anti-Nebraska press, giving voice to the general sentiment of its readers, had declared that Bissell must be made the candidate for Governor; he had overcome his fear that the new party would be a fiasco and had consented to accept the nomination.[5] No sooner had Palmer taken the chair and before the Convention was organized, and the appropriate committees appointed, than a delegate sprang to his feet and moved that the hero of Buena Vista be named. Impulsively

[1] E. W. Hazard of Troy, N.Y., en route from Chicago to Boston, to Trumbull, May 23, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 260–1. Although a delegate, Dubois would not attend the first session of the convention. 'Seeing Lovejoy and other Abolitionists there . . . he . . . stayed away for the time being.' Whitney, 76.

[3] *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 110.

[4] *Era:* Cole, 145.

[5] Bissell to George T. Brown, May 24, 1856. *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 154–5; also George T. Brown to Trumbull, March 29, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

seconds were shouted from all over the Hall and Bissell was nominated 'with a yell.' [1]

Amid cheering equally ardent and loud, the foremost German in the State, Francis A. Hoffman, was chosen by acclamation as the party's candidate for Lieutenant Governor — a party as yet without a platform or a name. In such fashion the work of the Bloomington Convention began. It was, indeed, a convention of the people. Thereafter, when orderly procedure had been established, the remainder of the ticket — a slate made out by Lincoln and others [2] — was nominated unanimously and as a matter of course. On this slate were Know-Nothings and Whigs only — no Republican was given a place.[3]

Lincoln and an influential German, Frederick Hecker, were named for Presidential Electors at Large. Delegates to the Philadelphia Convention to be held June 17, were named; among them was Lincoln. A State Central Committee was selected; [4] but the name 'Republican' was not given to the new party — indeed, no mention of it appears to have been made during the sessions. One plank of the platform urged 'Anti-Nebraska Clubs' to be formed in every town in the State.[5] In Illinois at that time, the word 'Republican' was,

[1] Cunningham in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 92–3.

[2] *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 156–8.

[3] James Miller, for State Treasurer, a Whig and also the nominee of the Know-Nothing Convention; Ozias M. Hatch, for Secretary of State, a Whig and a member of the Know-Nothing Convention. *Illinois State Register*, May 31, 1856. Jesse K. Dubois, for State Auditor, an old line Whig and Know-Nothing; William H. Powell, Whig and Know-Nothing, etc. *Ib.*, Sept. 8, 1856.

Many delegates to the Bloomington Convention had also been delegates to the Know-Nothing State Convention. 'This city was well represented by these double faced gentry.' *Ib.*, May 31, 1856.

[4] The official record of the Convention was printed in the *State Journal*, May 30, 1856. Also *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 148–63. Herndon was made Presidential Elector from the Sixth District.

[5] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 4, 1856. The caption of the *State Journal's* account of the Bloomington meeting was 'ANTI-NEBRASKA STATE CONVENTION.' A week later, that paper published an editorial on it, entitled 'THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION.' It was a gathering 'pre-eminently of the People. . . . Old line Whigs, Jefferson and Jackson Democrats, Republicans, American and foreign born citizens, laying aside all past differences, united together there in one common brotherhood to war against the allied forces of nullification, disunion, slavery propagandism, ruffianism and gag law which make up the present administration party of the Country.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 31, 1856.

In its brief report of the Bloomington assemblage, the New York *Tribune* called it

generally, still hated, and, with the prefix 'black,' Douglas had used it with terrible effect.[1]

At last Browning, Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, reported the platform. It was wholly the work of the conservatives. Browning had written every word of it;[2] but Lincoln, who had been with the Committee most of the time during the Convention, had collaborated, and the platform stated his views. Since the Administration had done all it could to promote the extension of slavery, ran the preamble, even to 'the suppression of the freedom of speech, and of the press; and to the revival of the odious doctrine of constructive treason;' and since the delegates were 'convinced that an effort' was being made 'ultimately to change the form of our government,' therefore:

'Forgoing all former differences of opinion upon other questions, we pledge ourselves to unite in opposition to the present administration' and to bring the Government back to the 'principles and practices of Washington, Jefferson and their great and good compatriots of the revolution.'

Congress had power to prohibit slavery in the Territories and ought to use that power; the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was foolish and wrong and in 'open and aggravated violation

'THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION.' The *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, May 31, 1856, headed its account, 'STATE ANTI-NEBRASKA CONVENTION.'

Only the Democratic press used the word 'Republican' in this connection: 'THE BLOOMINGTON CONVENTION — THE FUSION OF KNOW NOTHINGS AND BLACK REPUBLICANS,' was the title of a long and stinging editorial in the *State Register*, May 31, 1856.

'The black republican convention' was 'a consolidation of the know nothings, abolitionists and renegade sore heads.' *Ib.*

The *Cairo Weekly Times and Delta*, July 2, 1856, under the caption 'THE REPUBLICAN PLATFORM,' said that 'it was got up for the purpose of gathering in all the odds and ends of fusion,' etc.

[1] Cunningham, in *Bloomington Bulletin*, Feb. 2, 1909.

[2] 'No resolutions had been prepared for the Convention tomorrow, and no programme of Proceedings settled; and many discordant elements to be harmonized. I procured a room, got 15 or 20 of the leading men of all shades of opinion together, settled upon the order of proceedings tomorrow, and prepared and offered a resolution intended to reconcile both Know nothings and Germans to act with us. After considerable difficulty and discussion, I finally succeeded in getting all who were present to agree to it, and further to agree to support it in convention without objection or amendment.

'After breakfast, and before going to the hotel, . . . I prepared resolutions upon the slavery question, and the subjects now agitating the Country. . . . I was on Committee of resolutions. Presented those I had prepared in the morning — they were accepted — reported to the Convention, and unanimously adopted without change.' *Diary of Or-*

of the plighted faith of the states;' the attempt to 'force slavery into Kansas against the known wishes of the legal voters of that territory' was a 'tyrannous' denial of the right of self-government and 'we will strive by all constitutional means' to remedy that wrong.

Such was the tenor of the resolutions on slavery, Kansas, and the Administration. But something had to be said to make sure of the support of the Germans without alienating the Know-Nothings. So a mild plank was put in that, since 'liberty of conscience as well as political freedom' was guaranteed by the Constitution and the spirit of our institutions, 'we will proscribe no one . . . on account of religious opinions, or in consequence of place of birth.' [1] Trumbull was praised and Douglas abused.[2] Nothing was said, even indirectly, about prohibition.

The only part of the platform which had battle in it was that declaring for the Union: 'We are devoted to the Union, and will to the last extremity, defend it against the efforts now being made by the disunionists of the administration to compass its dissolution, and that we will support the constitution . . . in all its provisions; regarding it as the sacred bond of our Union, and the only safeguard for the preservation of the rights of ourselves and our posterity.' [3]

Then came the time to weld the discordant elements of the Convention and the constituencies they represented, into a harmonious unit, intent on fighting a common foe. All had to be sent away from Bloomington with minds convinced and blood up, and in such fashion that they would not falter or grow cold after they reached home. It was a hard task. The only man

ville Hickman Browning, May 28–29, I, 237. This *Diary* has been edited by Theodore Calvin Pease and James Garfield Randall. Professor Pease's introduction is a careful, accurate, and scholarly sketch of Browning's life, by far the best account of his career that has been written.

[1] The anti-nativist plank and the prominent recognition of the Germans were attacked by the Democrats as hypocritical: 'The black republicans boast that they number in their ranks thousands of Germans who once belonged to the democratic party' — but how would the Germans like to act with men who had tried to degrade them and exalt negroes? *Illinois State Register*, May 30, 1856.

[2] He 'has given the lie to his past history, proved himself recreant to the free principles of his Government, violated the confidence of the people,' etc. *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, May 31, 1856.

[3] *Illinois Weekly State Journal*, June 4, 1856.

there who could perform it was Lincoln. And perform it he did in a speech which, judged by its effect, then and thereafter, was the greatest piece of oratory he ever produced.

He had to use the passions of the crowd and yet hold them in check; he had to satisfy and even arouse the reluctant Whigs, and yet not repel the excited radicals. He had to enlist the Germans and secure the Know-Nothings — without either group the new party could not win. He had to make all factions forget past differences and present dissensions and remember only the one outstanding practical issue on which all agreed, opposition to the extension of slavery. In doing this, Lincoln had to say things which, for the very same reason that he then spoke them extemporaneously, he never would put on paper for publication thereafter.

Under these circumstances, Lincoln made his speech. James S. Emery, one of the Kansas agitators, had just finished. 'The audience had become much wrought up.' [1] From all over the hall came cries of 'Lincoln! Lincoln! Lincoln!' The room was not big, but according to newspaper reports at the time, two thousand men were crowded into it when Lincoln spoke.[2]

Although he had expected to speak, he had not written what he meant to say, as he always had done on important occasion. While Lincoln was speaking, Herndon tried to take notes, but became so excited that he stopped. It is said that John L. Scripps, then editor of the *Chicago Press*, also gave up; but it is not impossible that Lincoln told Scripps not to report what he said, as political speakers often do when they wish their statements not to appear in print. Nor would Lincoln thereafter write out his Bloomington speech. So it was not published in the papers as his other speeches had been and continued to be. In this wise it came to be known as the 'Lost Speech.' But it was not wholly lost. Whitney, cool headed and somewhat cynical, made a summary while Lincoln was delivering it, and from that sketch he wrote out and many years afterward published what his hero said at Bloomington.

A young reporter on the *Chicago Tribune*, Joseph Medill, who

[1] Cunningham, in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 93.

[2] *Belleville Advocate*, June 4, 1856.

was soon to have much to do with the advancement of Lincoln's political fortunes, was also at the Convention and heard Lincoln's speech. When Whitney's version of it appeared, Medill declared that it was fairly accurate, even to some of the exact language used. This is not remarkable. Whitney was the kind of person, found in many communities, who can reproduce sermons or addresses almost word for word. As we have seen, Lincoln, himself, had this peculiar gift.

Moreover, Whitney's reproduction of the 'Lost Speech' contains most of the arguments made in other speeches which Lincoln wrote during this period, and which were published; and some of the very statements in Whitney's version are found in certain private letters of Lincoln written about that time. Whitney's error was the pretence of presenting Lincoln's performance as a verbatim record, as if taken down in shorthand at the time; whereas it was impossible to give all the precise sentences Lincoln uttered, and, in such a reconstruction, the order of the arguments was likely to be disarranged. But on the whole, Whitney's report of Lincoln's Bloomington speech is as good as, if not better than, that of most speeches made long afterward from long-hand notes and from memory.[1]

Lincoln rose from his seat among the delegates. '*Platform! Take the platform!*' shouted the crowd. Lincoln did so and began with soothing words and tone. He had been impressed by Emery's tale of the wrongs done Free-State men, he said, and he wished to do what was needful to right those wrongs; but, he continued, 'we must not promise what we ought not, lest we

[1] At the celebration, May 29, 1900, of the forty-fifth anniversary of the Bloomington Convention, Ezra M. Prince, Secretary McLean Co. Hist. Socy., got expressions from those who heard Lincoln's speech that Whitney's version was not adequate and that they thought the speech 'still lost.' *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 180.

Gen. Thos. J. Henderson in his address at the celebration said of Whitney's report: 'I do not think it does justice to the speech.' *Ib.*, 82.

Isaac N. Phillips in an irritable 'appendix' to his *Abraham Lincoln*, published at Bloomington, 1901, pugnaciously assails Whitney's version of Lincoln's speech. Aside from saying that various men, all very old, who had heard the speech had told him that Whitney had not reproduced it accurately, Phillips' arguments are: 'The Whitney speech, in style, matter and manner is no more Lincoln's than sweet currant wine is champagne;' Whitney did not print his report of the 'Lost Speech' in his book, *With Lincoln on the Circuit*, although he did publish in that volume his version of Lincoln's speech at Urbana, in 1854, 'which nobody ever heard of,' while the Bloomington speech was celebrated.

be called on to perform what we cannot.' The ballot-box was a better weapon than rifle or knife.

In this peaceable and orderly fashion, public opinion must be registered promptly and with emphasis; for, unless a halt were called to what was going on in Kansas, '*blood will flow, . . . and brother's hand will be raised against brother;*' and Lincoln said this 'in such an earnest, impressive, if not, indeed, tragic manner, as to make a cold chill creep over' Whitney.

A great principle was involved, that of the extension of slavery. The Missouri Compromise must be restored and thus 'Kansas shall be free! [*Immense applause.*] . . . Let our practical work here be limited' to that one object.

Unfortunately, Lincoln admitted, there were disagreements as to other important matters; but he urged that all should act together on the one thing upon which all did agree. So 'bury all resentment, sink all personal feeling' and unite on common ground. '*Slavery must be kept out of Kansas!*' — that was the supreme object, he said.

If it were not accomplished, the outcome would be that 'this land of boasted freedom' would be converted into a land of slavery. ['Sensation.'] See what had already been done by the '*bogus* legislature' of Kansas; they had made it a felony even to tell a negro in that Territory that he was free.

'The party lash and fear of ridicule' would keep men from voting their real sentiments, he continued; 'men who will march up to the mouth of a loaded cannon without shrinking, will run from the terrible name of "Abolitionist."' That was how Douglas had whipped Illinois Democrats into line for his scheme to extend slavery. If that trick should succeed, if free negroes should be made '*things*,' 'how long, think you, before they will begin to make *things* out of poor white men? [Applause.]' Lincoln was here speaking of the idea advanced in Fitzhugh's book and adopted by a few Southern papers,[1] that, economically and morally, slavery was the best condition for labor regardless of color, a position which Lincoln never failed to attack in every speech he made during the campaign now opening.

[1] See Chap. I, p. 31, *supra*.

Revolutions did not go backward, Lincoln announced. Jefferson had written that '*all* men were created equal;' Douglas had inserted the adjective '*white*' before the noun 'men;' and might not the Know-Nothings 'add the word "Protestant,"' if they should come into power?

Lincoln then gave most of the arguments made by him in his Peoria Speech, interspersed with thrilling exclamations. 'Murderous violence is being used now in order to force slavery upon Kansas. . . . [*Sensation.*] . . . In Washington, on the very spot where the outrage was started, the fearless Sumner was beaten to insensibility, and is now slowly dying; while senators who claim to be gentlemen and Christians stood by, countenancing the act, and even applauding it afterward in their places in the Senate.

'Even Douglas, our man, saw it all and was within helping distance, yet let the murderous blows fall unopposed. Then, at the other end of the line, at the very time Sumner the man was being murdered, the city of Lawrence was being destroyed for the crime of Freedom.'

If Kansas should come in as a slave State, the border ruffians celebrate their victory with barbecues, and 'the free-State men come trailing back to the dishonored North, like whipped dogs with their tails between their legs,' America would no longer be 'the "land of the Free" and if we let it go so, we won't dare to say "home of the brave" out loud. [*Sensation and confusion.*]'

How had slavery been made legal in Kansas? asked Lincoln. In the same way that 'a gang of Missouri horse-thieves could come into Illinois and declare horse-stealing to be legal,' he explained in a characteristic illustration.

Anti-Nebraska men did not intend to interfere with slavery in the slave States; certainly the anti-Nebraska Whigs did not. Even the Republicans proposed no such thing — 'our platform says just the contrary.' That position was required by the 'necessities of our Union,' he said.

For the same reason, the South must have 'a reasonable and efficient' Fugitive Slave Law, he declared.

'[*A voice! "No!"*]'

'I say YES!' thundered Lincoln. [Applause.] 'It was part of the bargain; . . . but I go no further! [Great Applause.]'

The fathers agreed to slavery where it existed and to a Fugitive Slave Law, and that contract must be kept; but they were against extending slavery; and 'it is wise and right to do just as they did about it. [*Voices, Good!*]'

The present troubles were all due to 'this man Douglas.' Yet he would be 'carried in triumph through the State.' That, exclaimed Lincoln, shows 'whither we are tending. [Three groans for "Dug."]'

Why denounce Brooks and the leaders of the Border Ruffians? 'They were mere "cat's-paws" and did only what the Kansas-Nebraska Act made necessary. 'This man Douglas' and his supporters in Congress were 'more guilty than a thousand Joneses and Stringfellows, with all their murderous practices. [*Applause.*]'

It was folly, said Lincoln, to use force against violence, as so many wished to do — at least not now: the Government and, as yet, a majority of the Government and people were still 'against us.'

Do not insist on extreme measures, he counselled: 'as this struggle is likely to be long and earnest, we must not, by our action, repel any who are in sympathy with us in the main, but, rather win all that we can to our standard.'

Calmness and moderation would make converts for the Republicans, the violence of the other side would cause desertions from the Democrats. Be patient! All would come out right if freemen did their duty. Slavery was wrong and, although necessity forced the country to temporize with it now, '*as sure as God reigns and school children read*, THAT BLACK, FOUL LIE CAN NEVER BE CONSECRATED INTO GOD'S HALLOWED TRUTH! [*Immense applause lasting some time.*]' So let all 'unite in harmony,' appeal to the good sense and conscience of the people and rely upon 'their sober second thought.'

The repeal of the 'sacred Missouri Compromise' had necessarily produced 'the bludgeon, the incendiary torch, the death-dealing rifle, the bristling cannon,' and violence of all forms. 'We see its fruits in the dying bed of the heroic Sumner; in the

ruins of the "Free State" hotel; in the smoking embers of the *Herald of Freedom;* in the Free-State Governor of Kansas chained to a stake on freedom's soil like a horse-thief, for the crime of freedom. [Applause.]

'We see it in Christian statesmen, and Christian newspapers, and Christian pulpits applauding the *cowardly act of a low bully,* WHO CRAWLED UPON HIS VICTIM BEHIND HIS BACK AND DEALT HIM THE DEADLY BLOW. [*Sensation and applause.*]'

Nevertheless, retaliation in kind was not the method of final victory: 'let the legions of slavery use bullets; but let us wait patiently till November and fire ballots at them in return.' It was by means of that policy that Illinois had been made free. Never should her prairie winds touch the brow or her 'unfettered' streams lave the foot of a slave; but so long as those breezes blew and waters ran and the cooling groves shed their fragrance, 'the humanity to which they minister SHALL BE FOREVER FREE! [*Great Applause.*]'

Thanks to the Ordinance of 1787, Major's Hall was, to-day, 'a temple for free men instead of a negro livery stable. [*Great applause and laughter.*]' When a horse was stolen, everybody turned out to hang the thief; but if a man, 'but a shade or two darker than I am,' were stolen, the same crowd would hang the person who helped him to liberty. If that were to be done in Kansas, 'the next thing you will see is shiploads of negroes from Africa at the wharf at Charleston; for one thing is as truly lawful as the other; and these are the bastard notions we have got to stamp out, else they will stamp us out. [*Sensation and applause.*] . . .

'Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it. [*Loud applause.*] . . . If this thing is allowed to continue, it will be but one step further to impress the same rule in Illinois. [*Sensation.*]'

The time must come when 'only local law' rather than the Constitution, can 'shelter a slaveholder,' exclaimed Lincoln. Thus he stated a doctrine often announced by statesmen like Webster and many times repeated by Douglas. For a reaffirmation of that very idea by Douglas two years later, Lincoln was

to make his most successful attack upon the Democratic leader.

At last, Lincoln reached the climax of his speech which had been a well-nigh perfect mingling of appeals to emotion and common sense, a fusing of wise counsel and fighting sentiment. He made the same arguments against disunion and the same reply to the charge that the new party was sectional and would endanger national integrity that we shall hear him make throughout the campaign.

Lincoln ended this part of his speech by saying that loyalty to the Constitution and 'the flag of our Union' was vital, no matter what might happen. That basic rule governed all Americans, South as well as North. Then erect, face flushed, arms flung out, and at the last word, standing 'as if on tiptoe' and as if speaking to Southern disunionists,[1] he cried:

Even if Kansas should come in as a slave State, on the one hand, or the Missouri Compromise should be restored on the other hand, 'WE WILL SAY TO THE SOUTHERN DISUNIONISTS, WE WON'T GO OUT OF THE UNION, AND YOU SHAN'T!!!'

Cheering madly the crowd rose as one man, waving handkerchiefs, throwing hats in air. The floor shook with stamping feet. For several minutes, says Whitney, the tumult 'ran riot.'

Passionately Lincoln pleaded for the election of the ticket. 'Spread the floods of enthusiasm here aroused all over these vast prairies.' Make Bissell Governor — that 'gallant soldier . . . who stood for the honor of our State alike on the plains and amidst the chaparral of Mexico, and on the floor of Congress, where he defied the Southern Hotspur.'[2] To do that, would 'have a greater moral effect than all the border ruffians can accomplish in all their raids on Kansas.'

Calm and reasonable appeal to public opinion would, in all probability, make unnecessary a 'resort to force;' but, in any event, 'our moderation and forbearance will stand us in good stead when, if ever, WE MUST MAKE AN APPEAL TO BATTLE AND TO THE GOD OF HOSTS!!!'[3]

[1] Henderson in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 81.

[2] Lincoln here made reference to the threatened duel between Bissell and Davis. See p. 116*n*, *supra*.

[3] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 327–54. Appendix III. Italics and capitals Whitney's.

Again the Convention 'went wild.' The throng rushed to Lincoln. All struggled to shake his hand.

As long as Herndon lived, he contended that Lincoln's speech was 'the grand effort of his life. . . . At Bloomington that day he was seven feet' high.[1] Whitney's enthusiasm was equally extreme and lasting: 'when the majestic Lincoln, . . . defined clearly the duties of the hour; and then, with a mien and gesture no language can describe, exclaimed, . . . "we *won't* go out of the Union: and you SHAN'T:" the effect was thrilling: . . . No language can convey any conception of it.'[2]

That seasoned journalist, John L. Scripps, bore like testimony, and he also stated the result, to get which was Lincoln's whole purpose: 'Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence. . . . It fused the mass of hitherto incongruous elements into perfect homogeneity.'[3]

Even the sullen Dubois was wrought up: 'Whitney, that is the greatest speech ever made in Illinois and it puts Lincoln on the track for the Presidency,' said Dubois, as the crowd was leaving the hall.

Walking away together, Whitney told Lincoln of Dubois's prophecy. For a time Lincoln was abstracted, and then made a casual remark. But some of his friends thought that, from that moment, the Presidency was in his mind.[4]

Next morning the delegates were still loud in praise and wrung the orator's hand with strong grasp. 'Lincoln, I never swear, but that was the damndest best speech I ever heard,' exclaimed one of them, William Hopkins of Grundy County.[5]

With pride the *State Journal*[6] quoted an editorial from the *Chicago Press:* 'Abraham Lincoln of Springfield . . . made *the* speech of the occasion. . . . For an hour and a half he held the assembly spellbound. . . . When he concluded the audience sprang to their feet, and cheer after cheer told how deeply their hearts had been touched, and their souls warmed.' The country press said the same thing. Lincoln's 'wonderful eloquence electrified the audience of two thousand men.'

[1] Herndon, II, 384. [2] Whitney, 76–7. [3] *Ib.*, 77. [4] *Ib.*, 77–8.

[5] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 261. [6] June 3, 1856.

[7] *Belleville Advocate*, June 4, 1856.

This was the estimate of Lincoln's speech which most who heard it retained through-

Anti-Nebraska papers laid emphasis on the 'remarkable unanimity' of the Convention.[1] 'We never saw such harmony. . . . Not a ballot was cast.'[2] No wonder, retorted Democratic editors; since the assemblage had been managed by 'sharp lawyers' and 'controlled by Know Nothings.'[3] The ticket was made up of a renegade Democrat, a German nondescript and Know-Nothings, declared the *State Register*.[4] 'We committed Palmer fully,' an enthusiast of the new party gleefully wrote to Trumbull.[5]

Northern Illinois heartily endorsed the Bloomington platform and nominees. On the night of May 31 a great Kansas meeting was held in the Court-House square in Chicago. The New York *Tribune* said: 'The prairies are all ablaze.'[6] Although the announced purpose of the gathering was to express sympathy for the Free State men of Kansas and contribute money to help them, it also turned into a Republican ratification meeting, although the word 'Republican' was not used in the resolutions or by any speaker.

Judd presided. Hoffman, the Bloomington candidate for Lieutenant Governor, spoke first. Judd had captured 'Egan and that crowd of Irishmen,' as he had told Trumbull he would do if Know-Nothingism were rejected at Bloomington, and the Irish orator spoke next. But Lane made the speech of the occa-

out life. For instance: 'I have always believed it to have been the greatest speech Mr. Lincoln ever made, and the greatest speech to which I ever listened.' General Thos. J. Henderson in *Trans. McLean Co. Hist. Socy.*, III, 81 (May 29, 1900).

John Cockle, of New York, who was at the Bloomington Convention, told Henderson at the time that he had heard Clay, Webster, Calhoun, and others and that he 'had never before heard from any one so great a speech as the one just delivered by Mr. Lincoln.' *Ib.*, 82.

'I thought it then a great speech and I now (May 29, 1900) think it . . . one of the greatest . . . ever delivered by him.' J. O. Cunningham in *ib.*, 93.

On the other hand, Browning in his *Diary* makes no mention of anything more striking in Lincoln's speech than in that of other speakers: 'the Convention was very large, harmonious and enthusiastic. I was called out and made two speeches in the afternoon. Convention also addressed by Lovejoy, Lincoln, Cook and others.' Browning, I, 238 (May 29, 1856).

Judd, in his report to Trumbull of the Bloomington Convention, did not even mention Lincoln. Judd to Trumbull, June 7, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[1] *Quincy Whig*, June 7, 1856. [2] *Bloomington Pantagraph*, June 4, 1856.

[3] *Ottawa Free Trader*, July 26, 1856. [4] June 12, 1856.

[5] G. T. Brown, Alton, Ill., to Trumbull, June 3, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[6] Chicago Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, June 1, in issue June 5, 1856.

sion — perhaps the strongest he ever made. Experienced newspaper reporters, as well as other spectators, frankly said that they could give no adequate description of the effect of it.

'Were the rope about my neck, I would say that as to the Kansas code it shall not be enforced — never, NEVER! . . . Before God and this people, I arraign Frank Pierce as a murderer! . . . I was side by side with your gallant and noble Bissell at Buena Vista. . . . It did not occur to me then that I should be indicted for treason because I loved liberty better than slavery.' Thus spoke Lane for more than an hour, weaving argument, fact, inference, misstatement, and theatrical exclamation into an appeal that aroused the crowd to frenzy. Cheers broke out like thunder, died down, rose and pealed again. Fifteen thousand dollars were raised in cash, and many revolvers, balls, cans of powder and Sharp's rifles, some of them 'with double barrels, sure at each pop,' were given by the excited and bellicose hearers.[1]

The Chicago affair was typical of Kansas Republican meetings held in Northern Illinois and in sections of like mind and feeling throughout the North during the campaign before us. In such communities, a Kansas meeting was a Republican meeting and a Republican meeting was a Kansas meeting. In all, the dominant note was warlike. Vast sums were raised. The total is not known, nor what was done with the money. If the amounts reported in some newspapers form a basis for judgment, more than a million of dollars was given. Certainly all of it did not go to Kansas.[2]

[1] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 2, 1856, as quoted in *History of the State of Kansas:* A. T. Andreas, 136–7. Also, Peter Page to Trumbull, Chicago, June 3, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] For example: $104.50 given by employees of a reaper factory at Aurora, Ill., *Aurora Guardian*, March 13; $400 at a church meeting., *ib.*, June 5; $300 West Urbana, *Our Constitution*, Sept. 13; $1000 Ottawa, *Rockford Republican*, May 28; Rockford, $1000 raised and $3000 more pledged, *Rockford Register*, June 14; $2000 Quincy, *Herald of Freedom*, Feb. 16.

Such items in the press all over the North were numerous. The Democrats charged that part of these funds was kept by the Kansas agitators who made the principal appeals at most money-raising meetings; reports of talks among them, private but overheard, to that effect were published. *Illinois Daily State Register*, Feb. 20, 1856.

Democratic papers in Illinois asserted that Delahay sold to Minnesota papers the press and type bought with money given him to re-establish the *Territorial Register* at Leavenworth, Kansas. *Ib.*, Oct. 20, quoting the *St. Paul Pioneer Press.*

Professor Channing says that much of this money was spent in keeping up the Kansas propaganda in the North during the campaign. Channing to author, Aug. 16, 1926.

In Central Illinois, however, there was a different temper, and in Springfield old line Whigs were angry. Stuart, Lincoln's first partner, earliest Springfield friend, political guide and chieftain, and his relative by marriage, was outspoken against the new party. So was James H. Matheny, once Lincoln's intimate, and his 'best man' at his wedding. Throughout the middle and southern part of the State, many of Lincoln's strongest friends of former days denounced the 'fusion' in unsparing terms.

As soon as they reached Springfield after the Convention Herndon got up a ratification meeting. Big handbills were circulated announcing that Lincoln would speak at the Court House, and Herndon hired a band to play at the door.[1] Nobody came except the partners and the janitor, John Pain. The meeting was larger than he knew it would be, Lincoln whimsically said; he did not think the janitor would stay.[2]

Gillespie, in Edwardsville, was suspicious of the good faith of the anti-Nebraska Democrats at Bloomington. He wrote Lincoln a very long letter stating his doubts, and the reason for them. 'I have my fears that the so-called Democrats at the Bloomington Convention are going for Buchanan and that it will turn out to be a clean sell of the Whigs and true conservative men of the State. . . . If this is the game, I am for a thorough organization for Fillmore and Donelson whether we sink or swim. They are honest and conservative men and it would be more creditable to fail fighting under that banner than to triumph in such company as I fear some of the wire workers at Bloomington are.'

Gillespie could not get over Lincoln's defeat for the Senate by the very men now at the forefront of the new party. 'I am tired of being dragooned by some half dozen men who are determined to either rule or ruin. I am out of all temper with, and have no faith in the honesty of, men who insist that ten Whigs

[1] Whitney, 372.

[2] Herndon, II, 385; Whitney, 372.

Herndon spoke at other ratification meetings in the district. He reported that although the crowds were silent, they showed '*deep seated*' feeling. He thought there would be a '*stampede*' to the new party. Herndon to Trumbull, June 16, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

shall go with one Democrat because they cannot in conscience vote for a Whig. Though I am well satisfied with Trumbull, yet his five particular friends who would rather see the country go to the Devil than to vote for a Whig are not at all to my taste. I have made up my mind that henceforth I can be as reckless as they are, and, *so help me God*, they shall find out that I am one as well as either of them.' [1]

Such was the feeling of old line Whigs like Gillespie who had not joined the new party, but who were close to Lincoln. He never did overcome the prejudices of men like these; nor, as we shall presently see, could he move tens of thousands of his former partisans, although he tried his best to win them.

The state of mind of these Whigs who repudiated the Republican Party, who in angry protest against it finally went into the Democratic Party, and who now were, and continued to be, an important factor in Lincoln's career, is perfectly set out in a long letter by one of Lincoln's oldest, staunchest, and ablest friends, Edward B. Webb of White County: [2]

'I don't sympathize with that black republican movement, in any way, shape, manner or form,' wrote Webb to a Whig associate. 'Its temporary success would only end in an application of some fresh mouths to the public udder. . . . Its permanent success would surely end in the dissolution of this Union.' The result would be that there would be 'neither wheel nor spindle south of Mason & Dixon's line, but, instead, . . . gorgeous French and British embassies, and, at need, French and British friendly bayonets, . . . I hate slaves and slavery. . . . If it had but one neck, I would peril my precious soul by striking the blow which would annihilate it. But this *can't* be done. . . . I am tired of political strife and turmoil. My old friends, as a body, wanted patience, perseverance, and discipline, and there-

[1] Gillespie to Lincoln, June 6, 1856. Weik MSS. 'I was disposed at first to remain quiet, or even acquiesce in the nominations made at Bloomington if that would most conduce to an union against the Nullifiers; but I shall wait now and see what the future will bring forth. Let me hear from you as soon as practicable.'

[2] As we have seen, Lincoln had had relations with Webb while in the Legislature. Webb had been the Whig candidate for Governor in the Scott campaign of 1852, and Lincoln had earnestly supported him.

fore failed. They will carry these same merits to their new friends, and *fail again.*' [1]

Chagrined by the collapse of Herndon's premature ratification meeting, friends of the new party in Sangamon County got up another a fortnight later. Two hundred persons attended. The Democratic organ said that one-third of them were Democrats who went to see the 'gyrations' of Lincoln, Palmer, and Yates who had been announced as the speakers. Lincoln made his usual arguments, although 'under much restraint,' reported the *State Register.* He would start to say something strong, but, looking into the cold eyes of the old Whigs before him, 'he would soften his remarks to a supposed palatable texture. . . . His timidity before the peculiar audience he addressed prevented earnest advocacy with the power and ability he is known to possess.'

However, Lincoln did announce that 'there could be no Union with slavery. The agitation would be ceaseless until it shall be swept away.' But he cautiously avoided saying anything about restoring the Missouri Compromise or denying the admission of new slave States, and we shall presently hear him assert that the Missouri Compromise could not be reënacted. Lincoln laid especial emphasis upon the fact that the Bloomington ticket represented all factions opposed to the Administration Democracy. 'Mr. Lincoln's remarks were received with coldness,' declared the hostile Springfield paper. [2]

The *State Journal,* on the other hand, asserted that 'the Court House was filled to overflowing,' that many stood in the aisles for hours and that others were turned away. Lincoln made the 'most logical and finished' argument the editor ever had heard; but, said he, 'we shall not mar its beauty by an attempt to give a synopsis of it.' Lincoln's manner was 'calm and unimpassioned, he preferring rather to appeal to the reason than to excite the feelings of his hearers.' [3]

[1] Webb to an old Whig friend, May 23, 1856. *Illinois State Register,* June 10, 1856. Italics Webb's.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Register,* June 12 and July 4, 1856, of Lincoln at Decatur where he made the same speech. 'Most truly did Lovejoy predict in the Bloomington Convention that "*although the friends did not take abolition by inoculation, yet before the campaign is over they will be all broke out with it.*"' Italics *Register's.*

[3] *Illinois State Journal,* June 11, 1856, adding that the meeting was to ratify 'the nomi-

Recalling Lincoln's speech a month later, the editor of a campaign Whig paper then recently started, deplored it. 'Shortly after his return from the Bloomington Convention, we heard him. . . . We were not only surprised but sorry. . . . Surprised that a man of his acknowledged ability would indulge so thin and bold a piece of sophistry and sorry that a man, of his dignity of character, would descend to such pettyfogging demagogueism. . . . These thoughts and feelings we shared in common, with all Mr. Lincoln's old and long tried friends, those who stood by him in the days of his early struggles; those who had "breathed into him the political breath of life," those who had delighted at all times and everywhere to do him honor.' [1]

Coldness and hostility to the new party in Springfield and throughout central and southern Illinois, except in the German counties, were not relieved by the nominations and platform of the Republican National Convention at Philadelphia, which, however, was called 'The People's Convention,' even by the New York *Tribune*.[2] As we have seen, the Know-Nothings early in the year had adopted their platform and made their presidential nomination. The platform was a mixture of piety and patriotism and intensely 'American.'

'Americans must rule America;' Congress must not interfere with the affairs of the States; citizens, whether native or foreign born 'permanently residing in any Territory,' must be allowed to frame their own laws in their own way; emigrants must live here twenty-one years before they could vote; and foreign paupers and criminals must absolutely be kept out.[3]

Upon this declaration of principles and policies, the regular Know-Nothings had placed Fillmore and Donelson as the standard bearers of the American Party. Fillmore was fifty-six years old and was esteemed by conservative Union men all over the country. He was a man of fine personal character, had

nations of the People's Anti-Nebraska convention.' The name Republican was carefully avoided by that paper and by Lincoln throughout the campaign.

[1] The *Conservative*, Aug. 21, 1856.

[2] June 20, 1856. Throughout the North, and especially in Illinois and Indiana during the campaign of 1856, the new party was usually called 'People's.' For instance, the party organ in Indianapolis, in a leading editorial, termed the Republican ticket the '*People's State Ticket.*' *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, July 24, 1856.

[3] McKee, 100–2.

long been at the head of the leading law firm in Western New York, and had had a typical American career of uncommon success. He had been a member of the Legislature, a Representative in Congress for eight years, Comptroller of his State, Vice President and President. Abolition of imprisonment for debt, the tariff of 1842, cheap postage, the Perry treaty with Japan, the suppression of filibustering, and avoidance of foreign entanglements, were some of his achievements.

Lincoln had preferred Fillmore to Scott as the Whig candidate for President in 1852, and, if we may judge by what Lincoln said in letters and speeches then and thereafter, Fillmore had given the same administration that Lincoln would have given had he been President at that time.

Four days after the Bloomington Convention, delegates of the National Democracy had assembled at Cincinnati. For several days they and crowds of spectators had been coming to that city. The anti-Administration press used hard words in describing the throng. The Democratic Convention met, said the *Illinois State Journal*, 'under the impressive auspices of pistols and bowie knives, bludgeons and terrorism, and is graced by the company of five hundred gamblers and blacklegs, and from three to four hundred women of the town, gathered from the stews of most of our large cities, and all revelling together as in the festivities of a common jubilee.' And no wonder, for the Democratic Party had 'fallen under the control of the nigger drivers of the south.' [1]

Benton stated that the Democratic Convention met in a hall like the black hole of Calcutta, the only light and air coming from a row of small windows thirty-five feet above the floor; the doors were guarded by 'armed bullies' brought on from the 'Five Points in New York;' the delegates were officeholders and political offscourings.[2] In short, the Democratic National Convention of 1856 was held up to the people as a drunken, violent, shameless mob of ruffians and prostitutes.

The candidates were James Buchanan, Pierce, and Douglas. For months many Democratic politicians and newspapers had

[1] *New York Herald*, June 4, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 10, 1856.
[2] Benton's speech to his constituents. *Liberator*, July 11, 1856.

advocated the nomination of the Pennsylvania statesman, largely because of his availability. He had been abroad as Minister to Great Britain when the Kansas-Nebraska law was enacted and during the whole Kansas struggle. Although a Democratic Convention in his State had declared for him for President, there had been no general organization for him.[1] The *Washington Sentinel* had announced in January that Douglas would not be a candidate.[2] He did not want the nomination that year because of the storm against him.[3] But the popular Democratic heart was with the 'Little Giant,'[4] and a spontaneous movement among the delegates developed for him. Pierce had the Administration vote which was almost wholly confined to delegates from the South.

Yet so strong was Douglas sentiment that his nomination would have been 'inevitable' had the whole New York delegation, which was for him, been seated. Through the efforts of Senator James A. Bayard of Delaware, Senator John Slidell of Louisiana, and other moderate men, the New York vote was equally divided between contesting delegations; and this action, together with other astute manœuvring of those accomplished politicians, finally secured the nomination of Buchanan on the seventeenth ballot.[5] But to the last, the South Carolina delegates did all they could to defeat him.[6] For Vice President, a young man, John Cabell Breckinridge of Kentucky, was nominated unanimously on the second ballot.[7]

[1] S. L. M. Barlow's statement in *Life of James Buchanan:* George Ticknor Curtis, II, 170–3.

[2] Jan. 26, 1856. 'He neither desires nor would he accept the nomination.'

[3] *Richmond Enquirer*, clipped in *Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, Feb. 12, 1856.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Register*, Feb. 28, 1856. 'He has a place in the hearts of our people which no other man ever had.'

[5] Barlow's statement in Curtis, II, 170–3. On the first ballot Douglas received thirty-three votes (the solid Illinois delegation), Pierce one hundred and twenty-two and Buchanan one hundred and thirty-five. Douglas and Buchanan gained and Pierce lost until the sixteenth, when the bulk of Pierce's strength went to Douglas while some of it went to Buchanan; so that the vote stood one hundred and sixty-eight for Buchanan and one hundred and twenty-one for Douglas. Douglas had written from Washington asking the withdrawal of his name (*Washington Tri-Weekly Sentinel*, June 10, 1856) and, on the seventeenth ballot, Buchanan was given the full vote of the convention — 296. McKee, 87.

[6] *Charleston Mercury*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, June 27, 1856.

[7] McKee, 88. Breckinridge was then thirty-five years old. He was a graduate of

Few Americans have had a more extended and distinguished career than Buchanan had had up to the time he was made the Democratic candidate for President in 1856. A graduate of Dickinson College, he was elected to the Legislature and then to Congress which he entered as a Federalist, but speedily became a Jackson Democrat. At forty-one, he was Minister to Russia, and, while at St. Petersburg, was elected to the Senate. He was twice reëlected to that body by increased majorities, and during his service he made some notable and very able speeches.

As Secretary of State under Polk, Buchanan showed that aggressive nationalism then called 'the spirit of Young America.' He deplored and condemned the anti-slavery agitation, and was as much for the Fugitive Slave Law as Lincoln was. He opposed Scott for President on the ground that a professional soldier was not fit to be the supreme administrator of civil affairs, and that thus to elevate a popular military hero was unwise and dangerous in a republic. Pierce appointed Buchanan as Minister to Great Britain; but he declined at first, and finally accepted only upon the insistence of the President.

At the time of his nomination, Buchanan was in his sixty-sixth year. Old, weary, and far from well, he was unfitted for the crushing responsibility and incessant hard work, from which no President could have escaped during the four desperate years that preceded the war. He did not expect to be nominated, and it is not certain that he wanted the office at that time. Above all things, Buchanan was devoted to the Union, and he thought that the Constitution, which he construed much as Jefferson had done, was well-nigh sacred.

When a young man, he had fallen in love and became engaged, but his fiancée died. Buchanan never recovered from that blow and remained unmarried. The fact that he was a bachelor was used against him with telling effect among North-

Transylvania University, a lawyer, had served as a major in the Mexican War, and for four years had been a Representative in Congress, where he had won an uncommonly brilliant reputation. In 1861 he was elected to the Senate as the successor of Crittenden, but was one of those expelled from the Senate for treason in December of that year. He entered the Confederate Army as Brigadier General, rose to be a Major-General, and became Confederate Secretary of War.

ern women, who became an active and militant factor in the campaign we are now to review. His early bereavement, his stainless private life, his care of his sister's children after her death, the correctness and warmth of his household at the head of which was his niece, Harriet Lane — all this weighed as nothing against the charge that Buchanan was 'a crusty, musty old bachelor.' Indeed, the facts of his private life were not known — not asked for.

Such was the man drafted to carry the Democratic standard in 1856, and whose administration was to precede and to be interwoven inextricably with that of Lincoln. Under the leadership of this tired and aged man, the National Democracy was to make its last fight before the Civil War.

The Democratic platform stated the grounds upon which that fight was to be made. The traditional Democratic policies were again set out — for States' Rights, for economy, for the Presidential veto, for early naturalization of immigrants and facilitation of their opportunities to get farms of their own, against monopolies, against a National Bank, against a discriminating tariff, against internal improvements, as a system, by the National Government — but for the building of Pacific railways under the power of Congress to construct military and post roads.

The preservation of the Union under the Constitution was the 'paramount issue,' declared the Democrats; and they therefore denounced and repudiated 'all sectional parties and platforms concerning domestic slavery which seek to embroil the states and incite to treason and armed resistance to law in the territories, and whose avowed purposes, if consummated, must end in civil war and disunion.' This was made the chief battle cry of the Democrats throughout the campaign.

The principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Act were specifically adopted as those of the Democratic Party; and 'NON-INTERFERENCE BY CONGRESS WITH SLAVERY IN STATE AND TERRITORY, OR IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,' was declared to be a fundamental article of the Democratic creed.[1]

Next to their arraignment of a sectional party as a certain

[1] Capitals those of the platform.

cause of disunion and war, the strongest appeal to voters made by the Democrats was their declaration on foreign affairs, which, ran the platform, 'are inferior to no domestic question whatever.' The freedom of the seas, the rigid enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine, exclusive American control of an Isthmian canal — 'which no power on earth should be suffered to impede or clog' — and American 'ascendency in the Gulf of Mexico,' were vital to American interests and required by America's geographical situation on the globe. If anything could have recalled to their old party insurgent Democrats like Trumbull, Palmer, and Judd, this pronouncement on American foreign policy would have done it. As late as two years after Palmer had joined the Republican Party, he wrote to Trumbull for a stronger foreign and expansionist policy than even the Democratic platform of 1856 endorsed.[1]

With the Know-Nothings and the Democrats thus in the field, the first National Republican Convention met at Philadelphia on June 17, 1856. It contained much the same elements as the Bloomington Convention; the chief difference was that the anti-slavery radicals were far more numerous and bolder — in fact, they may be said almost to have dominated the Philadelphia gathering. Men like Giddings, Lovejoy, and Codding were conspicuous, determined, insistent. Many preachers were delegates or active attendants, and their talk was continuous and loud.

Order and decorum were as much features of the assemblage as were earnestness and fighting spirit. The friendly press made the most of the sobriety and system of this 'People's Convention,' as it was called, in contrast to what that press had described as the whisky-drinking, women-carousing turbulence of those who went to the Democratic Convention at Cincinnati. That at Philadelphia was, said a spectator, like a 'Methodist conference.' [2]

The Convention was held in Music Fund Hall. It was the largest auditorium in Philadelphia, and was crowded with dele-

[1] 'Manifest destiny gives us Mexico. It will come and let us take the lead in its acquisition.' Palmer to Trumbull, Dec. 9, 1858. Trumbull MSS. These MSS. contain other letters to the same effect.

[2] Eldridge, 65–6.

gates and spectators at every session. Sumner's speech and the House Committee's report on the Brooks assault, the report of the Kansas Investigating Committee, and other partisan and inflammatory documents, were circulated among delegates and visitors.

The Convention was overwhelmingly sectional. Only four border slave States were represented, and these but sparingly.[1] No rule had been observed in choosing delegates, all who came were seated, and States like New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, sent absurdly large numbers.[2] Robert Emmet of New York was made temporary chairman and Henry S. Lane of Indiana permanent chairman. Stirring speeches were delivered, excitement ran high, the great hall rang with cheers.

The reading of the platform by David Wilmot aroused as much enthusiasm as did the most eloquent speeches. In comparison with the Democratic platform it was short, and every sentence was as direct and deadly as a rifle shot. The new party stood against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, against the extension of slavery, for the admission of Kansas as a free State and for the restoration in government of 'the principles of Washington and Jefferson,' the brief preamble said.

The object and design of the 'federal government' were to secure life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to all persons under its exclusive jurisdiction; and neither Congress nor territorial legislature could establish slavery in any Territory. Congress had 'sovereign power' over the government of territories, and should keep out of them 'those twin relics of barbarism, polygamy, and slavery.'

The longest plank in the platform was on Kansas. It was a terrible indictment. Drums of war beat and bayonets gleamed in every line of it. Although the Constitution gave ample power to prevent such outrages, the 'dearest constitutional rights' of Kansans had been taken from them by violence and fraud; Kansas had suffered armed invasion; 'spurious' officials, upheld by Federal military power, had inflicted 'tyrannical and un-

[1] Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky. McKee, 97.

[2] New York, ninety-six, Pennsylvania, eighty-one, Ohio, sixty-nine, etc. McKee, 96–7.

constitutional laws' upon the people; the right to bear arms, to speedy and impartial jury trial, to security from unreasonable search and seizure, to due process of law, to freedom of speech and press, and similar rights, had been ruthlessly denied; 'murders, robberies and arsons' had been perpetrated — even encouraged — without punishment; all this had been done 'with the knowledge, sanction, and procurement of the present administration. . . .

'For this high crime against the Constitution, the Union, and humanity, we arraign the administration, the President, his advisers, agents, supporters, apologists, and accessories either *before* or *after* the fact, before the country and before the world. . . . It is our fixed purpose to bring the actual perpetrators of these atrocious outrages, and their accomplices, to a sure and condign punishment.'

When the reading of the Kansas plank came to an end, a tremendous demonstration was made. The sound of deep-throated huzzas rolled out of the hall and was heard blocks away. The band played and the roar of applause recurred and swelled again and again, earnest, fearful, portentous. It pealed forth once more when the declaration that Kansas must be 'immediately admitted as a State of the Union, with her present free Constitution' was read.

Cheers also were given when the 'Ostend Circular' was denounced as 'the highwayman's plea, that "might makes right."' But expansionist Democrats, like Palmer, who had joined the new party solely because they opposed the extension of slavery, were not ardent for this Cuban plank. It was a blow at Buchanan and, largely, a matter of politics.

The 'Ostend Circular' or 'Manifesto' was a document prepared and signed by the American Ministers to Spain, France, and Great Britain as a report which Secretary of State Marcy had directed them to make on Spain and Cuba.[1] Since before the Revolution, the acquisition of that island had been a general and ever-growing American hope and desire; there had long been trouble between the United States and Spain on account of Cuba; and in 1854 an aggravating action by Spanish authorities

[1] Pierre Soulé, John Young Mason and James Buchanan.

in Havana had brought matters to a head. But seizure of Cuba was now said to be a part of the Slave Power's extravagant plan of expansion southward to strengthen and extend the empire of bondage; and in this charge there was some truth. So when the three American Ministers met at Ostend, in Belgium, and wrote, signed, and published a report in which they advised that the American Government should offer to buy Cuba for a large sum, and, if Spain would not sell, should seize the island forthwith, anti-slavery, anti-Southern and anti-Administration men and newspapers denounced the 'Ostend Manifesto' in a great rage. In this wise came the Ostend plank in the Republican platform. It is not impossible that, in the campaign and at the elections, that inept political manœuvre hurt the new party, for, as we have seen, the wish for territorial expansion was very strong among the people, and was especially rampant in the West and South.

Roaring approval met the declarations that the National Government must give 'immediate and efficient aid' to the building of a Pacific railroad by the 'most central' route, and that Congress must appropriate all money needed to improve rivers and harbors. The cheering that greeted the reading of these planks was only less than that which burst out when the militant Kansas plank was read.

Indeed, the forthright assertion that the Republicans were for local improvements that would cost scores of millions to be paid by the general government, and for the building in the same way of a Pacific railroad, 'over the most central route,' was a powerful appeal to voters all over the North and West. The President had just vetoed the River and Harbor bill which carried large appropriations for many 'improvements' and the disappointment of expectant contractors and of water transportation interests was vindictive and great; and the people who wanted to ship products cheaply and travel in safety were irritated and angry.[1]

[1] Pierce vetoed five such bills in May, 1856 (*Messages:* Richardson, v, 386–8), on the ground that they provided for needless expenditure of money and were unconstitutional. For the President's constitutional argument against appropriations by Congress for such purposes, see *Ib.*, 257–71.

The vetoes in 1856 were quite impartial. The first was for opening the mouth of the

To please the Germans, a short, mild plank, vague in its generalization, was inserted against Know-Nothingism, calling for 'liberty of conscience and equality of rights among citizens.'

The candidate for President had been settled in advance, almost as much, and in the same way, as the nomination of Bissell for Governor at Bloomington. The outstanding leaders of the new party, like Seward and Chase, did not want to captain that craft on its trial voyage, and they refused to be candidates. But there was one man who was eager for the place, and he was, and for years had been, the most talked of person in the country. John C. Frémont had made five journeys across the Western plains and over the mountains, trips full of picturesque adventure, desperate incident, imminent peril.

The conquest of California and its admission as a free state, the survey of various routes to the Pacific — these achievements were inseparably connected in the public mind with the name of Frémont. Stories of his experiences were dramatic and thrilling — Indian attacks, fights with bears, defiance of Mexican troops, golden sands, Pikes Peak, snow, cold, storm; and these tales, written in sensational style and illustrated by pictures of daring, hazard, and triumph, had been read and admired all over the country, especially by young people.[1]

And Frémont was against the extension of slavery — opposed to slavery itself, indeed. He was the son-in-law of Benton; had been Senator from California for a few months, and had not mixed in politics. He was forty-three years old and in robust health. In short, Frémont was looked upon as just the man to lead the new party in its first foray. Months before the Philadelphia Convention, that astute and seasoned politician, Francis P. Blair, Jr., one of Benton's strongest supporters, had put forward the name of 'the Pathfinder' as the most available candidate.

Mississippi River, the money to be spent under the direction of the Secretary of War (Jefferson Davis); the last, for the port of Baltimore, under Davis; and another for St. Mary's River, Mich., ardently supported by Cass.

In the Senate, Mason of Virginia defended these vetoes, because the bills were scrambles for public money as well as unconstitutional; and he gave a list of such bills then being urged upon Congress. *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., 1320–4, May 28, 1856.

[1] Many campaign biographies of Frémont were published, most of them embellished with exciting illustrations. The shortest and best, but without pictures, was by Greeley.

So skilfully was this done, that the response appeared to be spontaneous. Here and there all over the North, favorable mention of Frémont was made in the anti-Administration press. Newspapers began to come out for him. He was not objectionable to the Know-Nothings — in fact, rumor falsely said that he was one of them. Yet, most curiously, the German papers were among the earliest to urge his nomination. He had known Robinson in California and the two men were fast friends. In March, Frémont had written for publication a letter to the Kansas 'Governor' ardently supporting the Free-State Party.[1] Forthwith the *Herald of Freedom* had declared for Frémont and carried his name at the head of its editorial column.[2] Frémont, though brought on the stage by anti-Atchison Democrats of Missouri, was the Kansas candidate; and in the Convention her delegation voted solidly for him.[3]

But Lincoln opposed him.[4] He would have done so in any case, almost by instinct; for Frémont's strongest characteristics were those which Lincoln did not like or trust — impulsiveness, insubordination, over-gallantry, dash. But the conservative Illinois Whig who so tardily had become a Republican had a concrete and immediate reason for his stand: Frémont could not get the stubborn old line Whigs, and it was Lincoln's particular task to herd them into the Republican Party, which, however, he steadfastly refused to call by that name.

So a few days before the Philadelphia Convention — indeed, the very moment he received Gillespie's complaining letter — Lincoln wrote Trumbull that the man to nominate for President was Justice John McLean of the National Supreme Court, a judge, said Wendell Phillips, who had 'made more pro-slavery law on the bench than all the pro-slavery judges put together.'[5]

[1] Frémont to Robinson, March 17, 1856. *Herald of Freedom*, April 12, 1856. This letter was republished everywhere. *Liberator*, April 18, 1856.

[2] 'OUR CANDIDATE: JOHN C. FRÉMONT,' *Herald of Freedom*, April 12, 1856, *et seq.* The Emigrant Aid Company's organ had been praising Frémont for more than a year. Jan. 20, 1855, it published a long and extravagantly laudatory article about him.

[3] Eldridge, 65–6.

[4] 'We were not in favor of Frémont's nomination.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Nov. 19, 1856.

[5] Phillips' speech at New England Anti-Slavery Convention, Boston, May 27, 1856, in full in the *Liberator*, June 6, 1856.

Many Whigs were inclined to go for Buchanan, Lincoln asserted, 'and will do it, unless the Anti-Nebraska nomination shall be such as to divert them.' McLean's nomination 'would save every Whig, except such as have already gone over, hook and line.' Even Stuart, and others like him, might go for McLean, but would support Buchanan if Frémont headed the ticket. 'They would stand Blair or Frémont for Vice President — but not more.'

It was a serious question, Lincoln insisted. 'Nine tenths of the Anti-Nebraska votes have to come from old Whigs' — the new party could not possibly win if they were 'disregarded.' Of course, Lincoln, himself, would not desert, although he was none too stanch; 'I am *in*, and shall go for any one nominated unless he be "*platformed*" expressly, or impliedly, on some ground which I may think wrong.' [1]

Nineteen of the Illinois delegation felt as Lincoln did, yet fourteen were for Frémont. But strive as they might, the Illinois McLean delegates and other conservative men, all of them former Whigs and most of them Know-Nothings, could do little against the storm of radical sentiment for 'the Little Mustang.' [2] 'The Democrats ruled the Convention,' testifies Koerner who was an onlooker.

McLean's name was first presented, and next that of Frémont. A tremendous outburst of enthusiasm greeted it. Then up rose a tall, robust old German, Philip Dorscheimer, son of a miller in Rhenish Hesse, and, 'with greatest unconcern,' speaking broken English, shouted 'in a stentorian voice:' 'I am a plain old German — no politician — but I can tell this assembly that I know my countrymen, and they will vote for no one more cheerfully than for John C. Frémont, who is well known to them as the pathfinder, and the one who first planted the Stars and Stripes on the face of Mexican California.' [3]

So on the informal or test ballot three hundred and fifty-nine votes were cast for Frémont to only one hundred and ninety-six

[1] Lincoln to Trumbull, June 7, 1856. Tracy, 66–8. Italics Lincoln's.

[2] On the 'informal' ballot fourteen Illinois delegates voted for Frémont and nineteen for McLean. New York *Tribune*, June 19, 1856; *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, July 5, 1856.

[3] Koerner, II, 15–6.

for McLean, and on the formal ballot the Pathfinder was nominated by acclamation.[1] The band played, flags waved, hysterical cheers shook the hall. 'The enthusiasm is tremendous,' Greeley wired to his paper, while the demonstration was going on.[2] More speeches followed, among them many by Germans.[3]

Although it was not clear to what party the Presidential nominee had belonged, the Convention thought that he was an old line Democrat. Therefore an old line Whig must be named for Vice President. Moreover, any candidate would be chosen who was acceptable to the McLean men.[4] Several persons had been talked of for the place, but sentiment had crystallized for Senator William L. Dayton of New Jersey, an old line Whig who had had 'a quasi connection with the Americans.'[5]

One of the Illinois delegation was Colonel William B. Archer, who had been in the Legislature when Lincoln was the Whig leader in the House. Few men in the State had been and were stronger friends of Lincoln than he. Archer was an old line Whig and a Know-Nothing, and had recently withdrawn as the 'American' nominee for Governor and thrown his lot with the new party.[6] Disgusted and angry over McLean's defeat, he resolved to nominate Lincoln for Vice President 'regardless [of] whom they might name.' So he hastened to the Girard House where the Illinois delegation stopped,[7] saw Trumbull, Palmer, Judd, and the other delegates.

They 'said Amen' to Archer's proposal, and from eight o'clock to midnight all worked hard for Lincoln among the delegates of other States. They made headway. Archer thought that they would have succeeded had they begun earlier. But too many delegates had been pledged to Dayton, and 'Ohio and Iowa treated me badly,' Archer reported to Lincoln. Still he got a Pennsylvania delegate of the name of John Allison to agree to present Lincoln's name to the Convention next morning.[8]

That body was in a happy mood when it again met, anxious

[1] McKee, 97. [2] New York *Tribune*, June 19, 1856.

[3] *Ib.*, June 20, 1856.

[4] Philadelphia Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, June 18, in issue of June 19, 1856.

[5] *Ib.* Indiana vigorously urged Henry S. Lane for Vice President.

[6] *Era:* Cole, 149. [7] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 11, 1856.

[8] Archer to Lincoln, June 21, 1856. Weik MSS.

to applaud every candidate put forward and to laugh at every joke. Allison kept his promise to name the favorite of Illinois, and he added on his own account, that 'he knew him [Lincoln] to be the prince of good fellows, and an old line Whig. [Cheers.]'[1]

Thereupon, Archer, in a typical convention nominating speech, told the delegates that he had known Lincoln for more than thirty years. Lincoln had been born in Kentucky and always had been a Clay Whig. Archer had 'no fear of the North of Illinois,' but the people of the southern part of the State had come from Kentucky and Tennessee. 'With Lincoln on the ticket Illinois would be safe for Frémont. [Cheers.]' Archer believed that 'it would be safe without him [loud cheers and laughter], but doubly safe with him.'

'Judge Spaulding of Ohio. Can Mr. Lincoln fight?

'Col. Archer (jumping at least eighteen inches from the floor, and gesturing emphatically with his arms) YES *SIR*. He is a son of Kentucky. [Loud and prolonged laughter and cheers.]'

A young New Jersey delegate declared that he was 'an Old Line Democrat' who had worked for Pierce and, if he had then had a vote, would have voted for him — he was now ashamed of it. But, since an old line Democrat had been nominated for President, an old line Whig must be chosen for Vice President. Dayton was the man '[Cheers]' — with him 'success was certain. [Cheers.]'

Then Palmer took the floor and made a rousing speech for Lincoln. He, too, was an old line Democrat, he said; he, too, had voted for Pierce; and he, too, 'was sorry for it. [Laughter.]' Palmer had met Lincoln, he said — 'no, he meant rather that when Mr. Lincoln was about in political contests, he (Mr. Palmer) generally dodged. [Laughter.]' Lincoln would be a fine candidate, but if Dayton should be selected 'Illinois was there. [Cheers.]' Or if Wilmot were chosen, Illinois would support him. '[Loud cheers.]' Palmer declared that 'he intended to name his next boy David Wilmot. [Prolonged laughter and cheers.] But if they wanted ten thousand additional votes in Illinois give them Abraham Lincoln. [Loud Cheers.]'

So on the first or 'informal ballot' one hundred and ten dele-

[1] New York *Tribune*, June 20, 1856.

gates voted for Lincoln.[1] But the tide for Dayton was too strong, he received two hundred and fifty-nine votes, and, on the formal ballot, was nominated, but not by acclamation — four delegates from Connecticut, fourteen from New York, and two from Pennsylvania voted for Lincoln, while eleven other votes from those States were scattered among several favorites.[2]

On behalf of the Illinois delegation, Palmer thanked those who 'have honored the favorite son of our State with their vote.' Illinois was 'devoted' to the 'great cause that has brought us together. [Cheers.] She knew that in Abraham Lincoln we had a soldier tried and true. We offered him to the Republican party of the United States' for the Vice Presidency; 'but we are content to prefer harmony and union to the success even of our cherished favorite.' So let those who had persisted in voting for Lincoln, now make the nomination of Dayton 'unanimous. [Loud applause.]'[3]

In this fashion and under the favorable conditions described, Lincoln's name was made known to the several hundred delegates from the entire North, to the scores of politicians in attendance from every Northern State, to the throng of spectators who crowded the hall, and to the scores of thousands of readers of the New York and other newspapers that printed detailed accounts of the Convention. Nearly all the delegates, visiting politicians, and hundreds of auditors at the Philadelphia 'People's Convention' in 1856 were to be present, in the same capacities, at the great Republican Convention at Chicago four years later. Archer, Palmer, Judd, and the whole Illinois delegation had impressed upon the minds of all that Lincoln was the best man in Illinois to get votes.

In this way, too, Lincoln was irrevocably committed to the new party no matter how much it was 'platformed.' By the use

[1] Maine one, New Hampshire eight, Massachusetts seven, Rhode Island two, New York three, Pennsylvania eleven, Ohio two, Indiana twenty-six, Illinois thirty-three, Michigan five, California twelve. Philadelphia Correspondence of the New York *Tribune*, June 19, in issue of June 20, 1856.

[2] Convention Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, June 19, in issue of June 20, 1856. All papers in the larger cities of the North gave detailed accounts of the Philadelphia Convention.

[3] *Ib.* A synopsis of the proceedings was published in the *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 18 and 19, 1856.

of that word in his letter to Trumbull he had with characteristic caution opened a line for retreat if he wanted to get out; and we have but to compare the Decatur and Bloomington platforms, together with Lincoln's printed speeches and letters at the time, with the Philadelphia platform, to see that the Kansas plank was too strong to suit him. But he said nothing against it; and after the work his friends had done for him at the national gathering and the heavy vote given him there, he could not have dropped the new party without political ruin, even if he had wanted to do so.

'We are glad Mr. Lincoln got so many votes for Vice President,' exulted the ardent Frémont paper, the *Chicago Democrat*. 'There is no political Maine Lawism or Know-Nothingism about him and a better Frémont man does not live.' [1]

Lincoln was in court at Urbana when the news came that a hundred and ten votes had been cast for him for Vice President. He could not believe it. There was a big man of the name of Lincoln in Massachusetts and he must be the one to whom such support had been given, he told Whitney. But those closest to Lincoln always thereafter firmly believed that from that moment, his ambition was fixed upon securing the Presidential nomination itself next time.[2] What he said and did henceforward must be considered with this fact in mind; for Lincoln's every word and act during the intervening four years fit perfectly into the plan and purpose which his nearest associates were, and continued to be, convinced that he had formed.

Hard as was Lincoln's task of getting his obstinate fellow partisans of by-gone days into the new party, the nomination of Frémont made it harder still. Below the northern part of Illinois, the old line Whigs, who in sullen indecision had stood aloof, now recoiled sharply from the candidacy of the theatrical 'Pathfinder.' He was not their kind of man. 'It would have been easier for us here, I think, had we got McLean,' Lincoln advised Trumbull; 'but as it is, I am not without high hopes for the state . . . we shall elect Bissell, at all events and if we can get rid of the Fillmore ticket, we shall carry the state for Frémont also.' [3]

[1] *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, July 5, 1856. [2] Whitney, 80–1.

[3] Lincoln to Trumbull, June 27, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

The experienced politicians in charge of the campaign for the new party, and the newspapers in whose hands its fortunes so largely vested, adopted the usual tactics of feeding the fires of enthusiasm where it did exist, and of pretending that ardor was flaming in places where there was no warmth. Greeley sent appropriate telegrams everywhere. In response to one of them, Herndon, who was Secretary of the County Central Committee, and by all odds the most active 'Republican' in Springfield,[1] wrote to the New York *Tribune* that the nomination of Frémont and Dayton was 'quite popular' in Springfield — indeed, 'the very best that could have been made.' Illinois was 'safe' — in fact 'the prairie is on fire — the flames go with a leap and a bound, consuming the dry grass as they go.' [2]

What nonsense! said the *State Register* in truthful if partisan comment on Herndon's fanciful report; he knew that the news of Frémont's nomination had been 'received with curses loud and deep' in that part of Illinois; he knew that the *Illinois State Journal*, 'his organ here,' did not come out for the Philadelphia ticket for more than a week after it was named; he knew that so fearful were the Fusionists to use even 'the little humbug's *name*,' that their newspaper in Springfield called the 'recent Frémont county convention, a "Whig meeting."' But politics were politics — Herndon and his 'clique' were playing the game.[3]

Little to be trusted as partisan comment always is, the acrid sarcasm of the Democratic organ stated the facts. Even the cautious Lincoln was too sanguine in his report to Trumbull. Stuart was confirmed in his dislike of the new party. So was Matheny. Except in northern Illinois, so were leading Whigs all over the State. They began to organize. Whig conventions were called. A Whig State ticket was nominated. Matheny became the Whig candidate for Congress in the Springfield Dis-

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 16, 1856. Adherents of the new party in Springfield did not yet, nor for a long time thereafter, call it 'Republican.'

[2] W. H. Herndon to the *Tribune*, July 1, 1856, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, July 12, 1856. 'All the machinery is put to work to create enthusiasm whether it exists or not.' *Rushville Times* (Democrat), Sept. 26, 1856.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 12, 1856. Italics *Register's*.

trict. Gillespie was made a Fillmore Presidential Elector at Large.[1]

Great Fillmore meetings were held. At one in Springfield, Stuart denounced 'black republicanism' with heat — 'the result, if not the design of their movement, was to array the north against the south,' he asserted, while the Democrats 'were governed by southern Hotspurs.' Matheny, too, belabored black republicanism — 'he was a whig and nothing else' — the Whigs should not be 'sold out,' he shouted.[2] Similar meetings were held, similar speeches made by Whigs all over the country. The Democrats encouraged the movement with thanksgiving and joy — perhaps with cash.

In this situation, Lincoln plunged into the campaign. From every quarter the calls for him were insistent and loud. They came from adjacent States, too — from Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa. William Grimes of Iowa urged Lincoln to come to that State. 'I am superstitious,' Lincoln answered in declining — outside speakers usually lost elections. Of course, if the Democrats should call in 'a foreign champion,' Lincoln would 'have no objection to drive a nail in his track.'[3] So, with a few exceptions, Lincoln would not go anywhere except to the Whig strongholds of central and southern Illinois. That region was the field where stubborn Whig votes were thickest and were hardest to glean. Trumbull wrote Herndon that work must be done in that quarter. Very well, replied the junior partner, Lincoln and he would go, 'as you suggest, into the southern part of our State.'[4] Again Herndon reassured Trumbull: 'Lincoln this moment has gone south east, . . . and will go further south. I shall follow soon.'[5] James C. Conkling, Republican State Chairman, tried to get up meetings in counties where Whigs flourished.[6]

Strong was the need of effort to win the recalcitrant old followers of Webster and Clay. They saw no reason for joining the

[1] *Illinois State Register*, Oct. 11, 1856.

[2] *Ib.*, July 23, 1856.

[3] Lincoln to William Grimes, July 12, 1856. *Works*, II, 290–1.

[4] Herndon to Trumbull, July 12, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[5] *Ib.*, Aug. 4, 1856. *Ib.*

[6] *Ib.*, Aug. 11, 1856. *Ib.*

new party; indeed, many of them thought that it was a deadly menace to the Republic. 'Some fool old-line Whigs would go for Buck, if Fillmore did not run,' Herndon advised Trumbull.[1] Even the tidings of blood and fire from Kansas did not move such men from their allegiance to their party, and especially to Fillmore who was a Know-Nothing and a Whig, too. Besides, said they, he could do as much for Kansas and against slavery extension as Frémont could do.

Fearful, indeed, was the news from that Territory. It now had become 'Bleeding Kansas' in fact. The hope of Greeley, Judd, and all Republican politicians that 'the Kansas excitement' would keep up until the fall elections was more than fulfilled, and at terrible cost.

Immediately after the sack of Lawrence and in retaliation of that outrage, the Free-State men who, just before the attack, had left that town with their Sharp's rifles, began reprisals. The other side was swift in deadly answer. Up to that time the death of any man in an election fracas or combat of any kind, even in a personal quarrel over a land claim, had been called a 'murder' by his fellow partisans. But only five or six lives had been lost in this way on both sides, during the whole two years since the settlement of Kansas began; and it is hard if not impossible to find the exact cause of those fatalities or to fix the whole blame for them.

But killings now became real murders in cold blood, and the number of them swiftly grew. Without mercy, often without excuse, both sides shot and stabbed and slew. If there can be any degree of guilt in conduct so atrocious, the blackest of these crimes was committed by John Brown and his sons. Also, it was among the first, if not the very first, of that series of homicides which made that brief space in the annals of Kansas, the most forbidding in American history.[2]

John Brown was captain of a company of volunteers, enrolled for the defence of Lawrence.[3] About midnight, on May 24,

[1] Herndon to Trumbull, July 12, 1856. *Ib.*

[2] The brief sketch of Kansas affairs in the text is from the sources named in note on page 305, *supra;* also from *Geary and Kansas*, etc.: John H. Gihon, M.D., the most impartial and accurate account written at the time.

[3] The muster roll and service are given in Villard, 121.

1856, he, his sons and three others, went to the cabin of a settler from Tennessee, James P. Doyle, aroused the family and, saying that he and his party were from the Northern Army, took Doyle and two of his sons out on the prairie and killed them. One was shot and stabbed, the head of another was split open and his arms cut from his body, the chest and side of a third was mangled and his fingers chopped off;[1] at the frantic plea of his mother, the youngest Doyle boy was spared. Two other pro-slavery men were taken from cabins near by and slaughtered in the same way.[2] Taking the horses of the dead and of another pro-slavery man, Brown then left. Doyle, at least, while pro-slavery, was a mild, quiet person who had taken no part in the violence of his party.

The Committee of Congress was taking testimony in Kansas at the time. The Democratic member, Oliver of the Missouri border district, demanded that witnesses be examined on the murders Brown had committed. The Republican majority, Sherman of Ohio and Howard of Michigan, refused — nor did they make mention of the atrocity in their report to the House. Most newspapers supporting Frémont and Dayton said little or nothing about the affair. Those that did faintly make note of it, misrepresented it or actually justified it. For the most part, knowledge of the outrage was suppressed by such papers and by all Frémont speakers during the campaign; and so covered up and excused was it, that for two decades after the close of the Civil War many denied that John Brown had any part in it, although he admitted responsibility from the first. But Oliver's minority report to the House and affidavits attached forced the horror upon the attention of Congress, and it was denounced in furious terms.

The countryside where these killings were done shook with alarm and anger. Settlers in the vicinity, 'regardless of party,' met, branded the murderers as 'midnight assassins,' and pledged support to the capture and punishment of them. With incredible speed the news flew over the Territory. Pro-slavery and Law

[1] Affidavits of Mahala Doyle and John Doyle in testimony attached to minority report, *Howard Committee*, 1193–5.

[2] Affidavits of James Harris and Louisa Jane Wilkinson. *Ib.*, 1195–9.

and Order newspapers at Leavenworth and Atchison issued furious extras. The Missouri border flamed with rage. Shannon issued belated and futile proclamations.

The 'militia' was again called out. Punitive expeditions took the field. Free-State bands resisted, retaliated, gave blow for blow, shot for shot; and attacked on their part. Colonel Sumner and his United States dragoons strove without avail to keep order. Both sides denounced him. Henceforth, and during most of the Presidential campaign, Kansas was a place of rapine, robbery, arson, and bloodshed.

From the moral point of view, both sides were guilty, almost equally guilty; but politics dominated all accounts that went to the country at large.[1] In the Frémont press, the Free-State partisans were represented as exclusively brave and noble men fighting for liberty; [2] in the Democratic press, they were branded only as outlaws bent on violence and plunder.[3] Exactly the reverse was said about the pro-slavery and Law and Order men. Anti-Administration and anti-slavery sentiment was in constant volcanic eruption throughout the North. Feeling in the South, though more quiet, was just as hot on the other side, and was based on reports and assumptions as partial and as false.

Nearly all Kansas marauders, whether pro-slavery or Free-State, were very young men, hardly more than boys. They finally came to be moved by love of adventure, by craving for loot, and by sheer blood-lust, as much as by devotion to the respective 'causes' for which they pretended to fight. With hearty good will, each side stole horses from the other side, and did the worst things they could think of. Even the *Herald of Freedom* finally admitted that this was true of some Free-State

[1] Gihon testifies that the guerilla war was begun by the Free-State men: They stole horses and 'attacked the pro-slavery men in the roads and at their dwellings, and committed most flagrant outrages.' Gihon, 86.

[2] 'The Northern men have gone to Kansas as settlers of the soil; the Missouri army under the command of Atchison to drive them out. The only "crime" which Lane and his men have been guilty of is that of DARING TO SETTLE IN KANSAS; it is this, which has provoked the civil war.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Sept. 8, 1856.

[3] 'The Beecher riflemen are carrying things with a high hand in Kansas. Lane has organized an insurrection on a large scale.' *Illinois Daily State Register*, Sept. 9, 1856.

'The great bulk of the outrages have been committed by the free state men, as the marauding and predatory bands call themselves.' *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 11, 1856, quoting the article of an 'Eye-Witness' in the *Albany Atlas and Argus*.

partisans.[1] The turbulence and the utter collapse of law drew to the Territory desperate characters from everywhere, as such a state of things always has done.[2] This fact was not admitted — indeed, it was hotly denied — by both political parties throughout the Nation.

On July 4, the Free State 'legislature' met at Topeka. Nothing could have been done more certain to aggravate the bloody situation. Under orders of the Acting Governor Colonel Sumner dispersed them. Fresh fuel this, and soaked in oil, for Republican oratory and journalism — Federal soldiers driving freemen from the legislative hall! Federal bayonets at the throat of liberty![3]

Soon after the beginning of this guerilla warfare, the pro-slavery authorities and forces at Missouri towns on the river closed it to boats carrying men from the North bound for Kansas. Most were stopped at Lexington, none got beyond Westport. Many passengers were genuine immigrants, many others were bent only on strife. All were heavily armed; even those who really meant to settle in Kansas had rifles and knives. The weapons were taken from them and whole parties sent back. One such company from Chicago was disarmed at Lexington, the weapons stored, a receipt for them given, and the adventurers returned to Alton.[4]

One side said that this barring of the river was a necessary

[1] 'Disguise the fact as much as we will, there is a class of irresponsible persons, calling themselves Free State men, who are engaged in horse stealing, and other crimes against pro-slavery settlers.' *Herald of Freedom*, Nov. 29, 1856.

'Each party annoyed the other by raiding the camps and taking each other's horses. We would get their horses one night, and they would get them back. . . . Then they would take our horses or something of ours. . . . We took each other prisoner,' etc. Morrall, *Kansas Hist. Coll.*, XIV, 130.

[2] Gihon, 89-90. [3] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Sept. 12, 1856.

[4] *St. Louis Republican*, clipped in the *Liberator*, July 4, 1856.

'No hard words passed.' The Chicago men had been given $100 each to go to Kansas. Republican papers were enraged by this incident and printed savage editorials. New York *Tribune*, July 3; *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 7; *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, July 12; *Canton Weekly Register*, July 17; *Rockford Republican*, July 24, 1856.

The Democratic press denounced the Chicago company as 'that band of hirelings and would-be bullies.' *Cairo Weekly Times and Delta*, July 9, 1856. 'They looked and acted more like a set of desperadoes.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, July 5, 1856.

The *State Journal* and all Republican papers branded such charges as lies and stood up for the accused companies as 'emigrants abused by the Missouri and South Carolina slavery clans.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 1 and 7, 1856.

measure of defence; the other side angrily declared that it was a pro-slavery act of war. It availed little, in any case — emigrants and fighting men went to Kansas through Iowa and Nebraska.[1] On both sides, the marauding bands and those intent on vengeance, grew in numbers and were called 'armies.' Those of the Free State Party finally became the larger and were far better equipped.

Fights between the warring forces amounted to skirmishes and were referred to as 'battles.' Several were fought. One at Osawatomie became famous — three hundred pro-slavery men under 'General' Reid attacked Brown and thirty or forty Free-State partisans and, after a fight of three hours, defeated them. The 'victors' burned the town, robbed the mail, stole cattle and horses, and murdered a man.[2]

Black headlines in Frémont papers throughout the North announced the catastrophe — twenty Free-State soldiers were dead, ran the sensational report, among them Brown and his son.[3] Greeley was always foremost in giving the most startling news. '*For the blood which has been shed in Kansas, for the civil war which exists in Kansas, for the consequences of making Kansas a slave State, should that event happen, and for all that is bitter and ferocious in the modern school of politics, it* [the *Tribune*] *is more responsible than any newspaper in the Union,*' — so charged the *New York Express*, a Whig and Know-Nothing journal.[4]

So it came about that 'Bleeding Kansas' was the chief source of political agitation in every free State during the Frémont campaign — the chief topic of editorials and articles, of campaign speeches, of general talk. The *New York Herald* said that the real issue and the only issue was 'Shall Kansas be a Free State or a Slave State?' [5] The Kansas 'war' together with the

[1] Gihon, 93. 'Large and well-armed companies came pouring in, many of them of irreproachable character, who came to the relief of the oppressed; and others of desperate fortunes, eager to take part in the disturbances from a spirit of revenge or a love of excitement; and still others, perhaps, for the sole purpose of plunder.'

[2] Gihon, 100.

[3] New York *Tribune*, Sept. 6, 1856. For typically partisan account of 'the battle of Osawatomie' see *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Sept. 8, 1856. The Frémont press generally glorified Brown as a hero and saint.

[4] As quoted in *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 23, 1856. Italics *Register's*.

[5] Clipped in *Illinois State Journal*, Sept. 3, 1856.

assault on Sumner drove thousands to Frémont who otherwise would have gone to Buchanan.[1]

In Illinois, the *State Journal* fiercely asserted that 'half the truth is not told' about the outrages in Kansas, laid the blame on the Administration and declared that Buchanan would continue its policy of blood.[2] Signers of a 'monster petition' asked Governor Matteson to call an extra session of the Legislature to 'devise some means to protect the citizens of Illinois' in Kansas from the Border Ruffians.[3] Matteson, of course, ignored the request; but he notified several companies of militia 'to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Kansas.'[4] Military companies were organized and equipped to go to the Territory to fight.[5]

The principal Republican campaign documents were Sumner's 'Crime Against Kansas,' Seward's speech for 'Free Kansas,' an analysis of 'The Laws of Kansas' by Schuyler Colfax of Indiana, the Majority Report of the Kansas Congressional Committee,[6] and the House Committee's Report on Brooks.

[1] John P. Mann, Chairman anti-Nebraska (Republican) Committee, Chester, Ill., to Trumbull, June 17, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Sept. 12, 1856.

[3] *Aurora Daily Beacon*, Sept. 24, 1856; *Rockford Register*, Sept. 13, 1856; *Urbana Union*, Sept. 18, 1856.

'We have sent the petition to the Governor, now let us go to work and send men and means to Kansas to conquer it effectually for Freedom.' *Aurora Daily Beacon*, Sept. 24, 1856.

[4] *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, Oct. 4, 1856.

[5] 'Twenty-seven men under the command of Rev. Wm. Strawn, intend to take up their line of march for Kansas. They go armed with Sharp's rifles, we believe, and doubtless will strike terror into the border ruffians.' *Ottawa Free Trader*, June 14, 1856. Strawn's company was disarmed and sent back. *Ib.*, July 5 and 12, 1856.

'The company for Kansas is now organized. . . . It is composed of men of the right stamp.' *Rockford Republican*, June 25, 1856.

'One hundred men leave Chicago for Kansas next Monday, via the Rock Island railroad. Gen. Lane meets them at Iowa City on Tuesday.' *Aurora Guardian*, June 12, 1856.

'Who then is possessed of heroism and enterprise sufficient to volunteer to raise a company to go to Kansas.' *Rockford Republican*, March 5, 1856, and others in Illinois and throughout the North.

[6] New York *Tribune*, July 29, 1856. Also Trumbull MSS. from July to Nov., 1856. Most requests to Trumbull from Illinois constituents were for some of these documents, chiefly Sumner's speech and the report of the Kansas Committee. All were printed by the New York *Tribune*, for campaign uses.

The principal Democratic campaign documents were Douglas's Kansas report of March 12, 1856, and his Kansas speeches of March 20 and April 4, 1856. These speeches

'The demand for Sumner's speech is beyond calculation or precedent,' reported the New York *Tribune*.[1] 'Scatter the Kansas investigating Committee's report,' Herndon urged Trumbull.[2] Typical of Republican campaign literature was a pamphlet entitled 'THE REIGN OF TERROR IN KANSAS, *as Encouraged by President Pierce, and Carried out by the Southern Slave Power*.' Wholesale robbery, burning, rape, murder, and like atrocities by Border Ruffians, were described; and the text was embellished with crude pictures of flogging, scalping, and bowie-knifing.

Lincoln's letters, however, and newspaper reports of what he said, show that he took no part in the Kansas agitation; most certainly he did not fan the flames of fury that swept over the North. His moderation, his hatred of violence in any form or by anybody, his passion for fairness, perhaps the information Delahay had given him, kept him cool among those who bore firebrands. Also Delahay was now in Illinois. At a meeting in Springfield toward the end of September, Lincoln spoke to a crowd that 'jammed' the Hall of Representatives, but he gave most of his time to the attitude of the Government toward slavery, 'from its earliest history' until Douglas interfered, and said nothing about Kansas outrages and nothing to offend his former fellow partisans.[3]

For Lincoln's work was cut out for him — he must persuade the old line Whigs to leave Fillmore and go for Frémont. These Whigs were genuine conservatives. Above all things, they were for regular government, for law and order, and 'the Kansas excitement' did not appeal to them as it stirred radicals and those of emotional temperament.

July 10 a great 'Free Kansas' Convention was held at Buffalo. Reeder presided. Gerrit Smith demanded war, and pledged himself to give fifteen hundred dollars a month to buy

were printed in German and circulated in Illinois. This alarmed Republican politicians, and they clamored for Republican speeches also in German. C. Cook and L. Raugh to Trumbull, Ottawa, Ill., July 29, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

Three hundred thousand of Douglas's Kansas Report were printed: he paid one-third of the cost and gave money to his party's campaign fund. *Douglas:* Johnson, 304–5.

[1] June 3, 1856. [2] Herndon to Trumbull, July 12, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Sept. 26, 1856. 'Never was he so powerful.'

Sharp's rifles for the 'freemen of Kansas' until they won their fight. Eli Thayer was made General Manager of a vast and intricate organization covering the whole North to collect provisions, money, and arms. Not less than one hundred thousand dollars were to be raised every month. 'Organize a Republican or Free-Kansas club in your township, ward, election or school district,' Greeley urged his scores of thousands of readers.[1] A national Kansas relief committee was appointed, of one man from each State. It had little or nothing to do, since the practical work was put in other hands. Lincoln was chosen as the Illinois member.[2] He declined on the ground that he was too busy, and suggested that Fell be appointed in his stead.

In his speeches throughout the campaign Lincoln stuck to two great issues — slavery must not be extended, the Union must be preserved. Not again did he show passion, as at the Bloomington Convention had been necessary. All accounts written at the time, whether by friend or foe, state that he always spoke argumentatively and in a conversational tone, albeit with intense earnestness.

Lincoln went first to German communities, but he found them so strong for Frémont that he did not make many speeches to them. 'God bless the Dutch,' he exclaimed at Belleville, 'almost with tears in his eyes,' when telling the crowd that 'here, as well as in other places where he had spoken, he had found the Germans more enthusiastic for the cause of Freedom than all other nationalities.' [3]

Thus, very early in the campaign, Lincoln became assured that the Germans were 'safe' for the new party. Indeed, from the moment the Philadelphia nominations were made, the Germans had almost taken the lead throughout the North, even over the Republican radicals, in their eager endorsement of 'Frémont and freedom.' [4] So Lincoln gave nearly all of his time and strength to the obstinate old Whigs.

[1] New York *Tribune*, June 13, 1856.

[2] For full proceedings of the Buffalo Convention see New York *Times*, July 11, 1856. Also Thayer, 214–7.

[3] Koerner, II, 32–3.

[4] The New York *Times*, Feb. 26, 1856, published a list of German papers. Even then most of them were 'Republican' and for Frémont. See also *Illinois Daily State Journal*,

'I have just returned from speaking in . . . Edgar, . . . Coles and Shelby counties,' he wrote to Trumbull. 'Our whole trouble along there has been and is Fillmoreism. . . . I think we shall ultimately get all the Fillmore men, who are really anti-slavery extension — the rest will probably go to Buchanan. . . . The great difficulty with anti-slavery extension Fillmore men, is that they suppose Fillmore as good as Frémont on that question.' Trumbull must go to the strong Whig communities at once, insisted Lincoln.[1]

As summer advanced, the regular Whigs became more active, more determined. In the fall, a great Whig meeting was held in Springfield. The *State Journal*[2] belittled it and this only made the Whigs angry. At Albany, New York, early in July, Fillmore, in his capacity of Presidential candidate, stated the issue which Douglas during the previous year had advanced as the capital question of the times — the purely sectional nature of the new party and the certainty that the success of it would force disunion and civil war.

'We see,' said Fillmore, 'a political party presenting candidates . . . selected for the first time from the Free States alone, with the avowed purpose of electing these candidates by suffrages of one part of the Union only, to rule over the whole United States. Can it be possible that those who are engaged in such a measure can have seriously reflected upon the consequences which must inevitably follow in case of success? Can they have the madness or the folly to believe that our Southern brethren would submit to be governed by such a Chief Magistrate? Would he be required to follow the same rule prescribed by those who elected him in making his appointments' — Cabinet members, foreign representatives, heads of departments, Federal Judges?

'Suppose that the South,' argued Fillmore, 'having a majority of the electoral votes, should declare that they would only have slaveholders for President and Vice-President, and

July 12, 16, Aug. 14, 27, Sept. 4, 26, Oct. 2, 1856; *Rockford Republican*, Sept. 3, 1856; *Quincy Whig*, Oct. 4, 1856.

[1] Lincoln to Trumbull, Aug. 11, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[2] Oct. 3, 1856. 'Well may Democrats pat this new Fillmore movement on the back.'

should elect such by their exclusive suffrages to rule over us at the North. Do you think we would submit to it? No, not for a moment. . . . It seems to me impossible that those engaged in this can have contemplated the awful consequences of success. If it breaks asunder the bonds of our Union, and spreads anarchy and civil war through the land, what is it less than moral treason?' [1]

Leading Whigs everywhere felt as keenly as Fillmore that the new party was a peril to the Nation, and that Republican victory would rend the Republic. To avert that catastrophe, many of them decided, early in the campaign, to vote for Buchanan. From Boston, Rufus Choate, greatest and last of the Webster Whigs, struck with all his might. 'The first duty, then, of whigs, not merely as patriots and as citizens, . . . but as whigs, and because we are whigs, is . . . to defeat and dissolve the new geographical party, calling itself republican,' he wrote to the Maine Whig State Central Committee. Indeed that was the 'only duty' of Whigs, he said.

'By what vote can I do most to prevent the madness of the times from working its maddest act, — the very ecstasy of its madness, — the permanent formation and the actual present triumph of a party which knows one half America only to hate and dread it; from whose unconsecrated and revolutionary banner fifteen stars are erased or have fallen; in whose national anthem the old and endeared airs of the Eutaw Springs, and the King's Mountain, and Yorktown, and those, later, of New Orleans, and Buena Vista, and Chapultepec, breathe no more.'

Choate's letter was long, well reasoned, passionate. The peril of the Republican Party to the Union was plain, he insisted. 'Its mere struggle to obtain the government, as that struggle is conducted, is mischievous to an extent incalculable.' If it were the purpose of a political party to work up hostile sentiment to prepare the Nation for war with a foreign power, 'it could not do its business more thoroughly,' than the Republicans were

[1] 'Life and Times of Millard Fillmore:' in *The Republic, or a History of the United States:* John Robert Irelan, XIII, 423–4.

For this speech Fillmore was assailed with utmost virulence by Frémont papers. *New York Herald,* Sept. 24, 1856.

doing in working up Northern feeling against the South. Was that the statesmanship, the patriotism of Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Jackson, Webster, Clay? asked Choate. Was that the counsel of America's mighty dead?

In his terror of the outcome, Choate became frantic, albeit he argued with the lawyer's skill. If the dread work of the Republican Party 'accomplishes its object and gives the Government to the North, I turn my eyes from the consequences. To the fifteen States of the South, that government will appear an alien government. . . . It will appear a hostile government,' — a single, vast section — 'flushed by triumph, cheered onward by the voices of pulpit, tribune, and press. . . . And then and thus is the beginning of the end.'

Kansas was a mere pretext, Choate asserted. 'Strike down the rifle and the bowie knife,' let migration take its natural course, and Kansas would 'choose freedom for itself.' In no other Territory was slavery possible: 'a national party to give them freedom is about as needful and about as feasible as a national party to keep Maine for freedom.' So Whigs must 'do what we can to defeat and disband the geographical party. . . . In these circumstances I vote for Mr. Buchanan. He has large experience in public affairs; his commanding capacity is universally acknowledged; his life is without a stain;' above all other public men, 'he seems at this moment . . . to represent that sentiment of nationality — tolerant, warm and comprehensive, — without which, without increase of which, America is no longer America.' [1]

Choate's attack on the Republican Party had prodigious effect. All Whig and Democratic papers, and even many that were supporting Frémont, published it.[2] It was printed as a leaflet and distributed by the hundred thousand. Webster's son, Fletcher Webster, took the field and with utmost virulence also assailed the 'sectional or black republican Party' and, like his leader, announced himself for the Democratic candidate.[3]

[1] Choate to the Maine Whig State Central Committee, Aug. 9, in *Boston Courier*, Aug. 14, clipped in New York *Times*, Aug. 15, 1856.

[2] The *Illinois Daily State Register*, Aug. 21, printed Choate's letter in full.

[3] *Ib.*, Sept. 16, 1856.

James B. Clay, the son of Henry Clay, mounted the stump for Buchanan because Republican success would mean 'the dissolution of the Union.'[1] For the same reason Frémont's brother-in-law came out for Buchanan.[2] The new party was, cried State Senator Wadsworth of New York, himself an opponent of slavery extension, a party of '*passion, prejudice, and disunion;*' it was purely sectional and fanatical, '*cannot be a national party,*' and must be destroyed.[3]

Toward the end of the campaign Choate made an elaborate speech at Lowell, Massachusetts, on the line of his letter to the Maine Whigs.[4] On the same grounds, Amos A. Lawrence of Boston, while declining to be a Presidential elector on the 'American' ticket, announced that he would support Fillmore.[5] That Republican success meant disunion and war became the chief issue of all who opposed the new party. Nonsense! answered the *Illinois State Journal.* 'Capitalists and commercial men are asked to "save the members from ruin" and their property from "depreciation," by opposing Frémont and thus "saving the Union."' How absurd! How base![6]

Wendell Phillips increased Whig terror. '*There is merit in the Republican Party,*' he said. 'It is this. It is the *first SECTIONAL party* ever organized in this country. It does not know its own face, and calls itself national, but it is not *national;* it is the *North against the South.*'[7] Greeley frankly admitted the charge, adopted it, pressed it: 'Is THERE A NORTH?' asked the *Tribune.* 'It is high time this question were definitively answered.'[8]

The ablest Southern speakers came North and pleaded, almost with tears, for that national unity and brotherhood which had made the Republic prosperous, happy, and great and

[1] Clay's speech at Tippecanoe Battle Ground, *Illinois Daily State Register,* Sept. 19, 1856.

[2] *Ib.,* Oct. 3, 1856.

[3] As quoted in editorials New York *Times,* July 11, 1856.

[4] In full in *Ib.,* Oct. 30, 1856. 'Before the next President takes his seat, Kansas will be as quiet as Middlesex County.'

[5] Lawrence to Peter L. Cox, July 4, in New York *Times,* July 14, 1856.

[6] *Illinois Daily State Journal,* Oct. 16, 1856.

[7] *Illinois Daily State Register,* Aug. 23, 1856. Italics and capitals *Register's.*

[8] New York *Tribune,* Oct. 31, 1856. Editorial. Capitals Greeley's.

which, they claimed, would be broken by sectional strife.[1] In his campaign speeches in the free States, Breckinridge, the Democratic candidate for Vice President, said that the South could not and would not submit to sectional rule; and he asked his Northern hearers whether they would do so in like case. Sadly many shook their heads in response, while others boldly shouted, No!

In the South, the 'fire-eaters,' now swiftly rising to influence, thundered defiance, and preached secession in fierce and implacable terms. 'The Southern man who would submit to Frémont's election is a traitor and a coward,' shouted Keitt, to a madly cheering crowd of Virginia farmers.[2] '*I have been a disunionist from the time I could think*,' exclaimed Brooks at a banquet in his honor; if Frémont — 'that Frenchman' — were elected, the South must secede, take Washington, seize the Treasury. Brooks, himself, would lead troops for that purpose. Down with the Constitution![3] 'TREASON!' shouted the *State Journal* in an emphatic introductory to an extract from 'Bully Brooks's' speech which that paper printed.[4] On the other hand,

[1] Notably Senator Hunter of Virginia at Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Oct. 1, 1856. Hunter said that it was the first time in his life that he ever made a speech to a popular assembly outside his own State. From the Southern and pro-slavery point of view, his speech was able, and his plea for harmony eloquent. The North was already far stronger than the South, he said, and must grow stronger every day — so why should she insult and irritate the South? The Republican Party was wholly sectional and bent on forcing disunion, etc. New York *Times*, Oct. 2, 1856, published Hunter's speech in full.

Toombs delivered a lecture on slavery in many Northern cities during the first part of the year. He began at Boston. *New York Herald*, Feb. 2, 1856.

Mason of Virginia delivered the oration on Bunker Hill Day at Boston; it was on the advantages of the Union and the necessity of upholding the Constitution. *Alexandria* (Va.) *Gazette*, June 20, 1856.

[2] *New York Herald*, Sept. 11, 1856. 'Where is the Southern man who says the South can stay with the North in this Union, stigmatized, dishonored, reviled, plundered, degraded? [Enthusiastic cheers.]

'Where is the Southern man with the blood of a freeman in his veins, who would not strike down the foul dominators? [Tremendous cheers, which continued for several minutes.]

'I tell you now that if Frémont is elected, adherence to the Union is treason to liberty. [Loud cheers.]

'I tell you now that a Southern man who would submit to his election is a traitor and a coward. [Great Cheers.]'

[3] *Ib.*, Oct. 9, 1856.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Oct. 14, 1856. Capitals *Journal's*. An editorial, clipped from the *New York Herald* in the *Daily Illinois State Journal*, Oct. 17, said that 'the lawless despotism of the South,' as bad as Russia, 'as blood-thirsty as Robespierre,'

think what would happen if Buchanan was elected — the slave trade would be 'reopened.' [1]

The election of Frémont would sound the knell of the Union, said the *Charleston Mercury*.[2] The *Richmond Enquirer* declared that if the sectional party won, the South would withdraw, take with her southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, set up her own Government, and make treaties with friendly foreign powers.[3] Yet, as a section, the South was quiet — conservative Union sentiment still lingered.[4] It is impossible to repeat this fact too often or with too much emphasis, if we are to get a just and accurate view of Southern feeling at that time. 'All they [Southern people] ask from us is simply to let them alone,' said Buchanan as election day approached.[5]

Such was the condition Lincoln faced. In Central and Southern Illinois great numbers of Whigs and Know-Nothings thought and felt as hundreds of thousands of their party brothers did in other parts of the country. On August 14, a straight-out Whig paper, the *Conservative*, was started in Springfield. It advocated the election of Fillmore. Whig meetings grew in size and spectacular display. The Democrats cheered them on. But neither they nor the great Democratic demonstrations

etc., was 'laboring to subdue the North under threats of disunion . . . and civil war.'

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Nov. 3, 1856. This became a general Republican assertion at the end of the campaign. New York *Tribune*, Nov. 4, 1856, and other Frémont papers during the week before election.

[2] As quoted in New York *Times*, Oct. 11, 1856.

[3] As quoted by Botts in his Petersburg speech, Sept. 28, 1856, in *New York Herald*, Oct. 6, 1856. See *infra*.

The Southern press, led by the *Charleston Mercury*, was almost a unit for secession in the event of Frémont's election. *Ib.*, Sept. 26, 1856.

[4] This was shown in the heavy vote for Fillmore, in Southern States. Now and then this feeling was expressed during the campaign. For instance, Professor Hedrick of the University of North Carolina wrote a strong Union and anti-slavery letter to the *Raleigh Standard* and boldly declared that he was for Frémont; for which he was forced to leave the University. Clipped in New York *Times*, Oct. 14, 1856.

John Minor Botts of Richmond made a strong and determined Union speech at Petersburg, Va., Sept. 28, 1856. *New York Herald*, Oct. 6, 1856.

On Oct. 7, at the celebration in South Carolina of the anniversary of the battle of King's Mountain, 15,000 people from all over the South vociferously cheered the orator of the day, George Bancroft of Massachusetts, the historian and diplomat, and Polk's Secretary of the Navy, when he exclaimed: 'Let the Union stand like your own mountains,' for we are all 'one people.' *New York Herald*, Oct. 11, 1856.

[5] *Buchanan:* Curtis, II, 176.

equalled the Republican gatherings. A tidal wave of emotion swept over the North. In numbers, noise, show, and all the elements of popular uprising, the fight for Frémont was almost identical with that for Harrison in 1840. But the Republicans of 1856 had a definite program, a mass of arguments, a great cause.

The foremost Republican orators in the Nation came to Illinois — Seward, Hale, Wade, Giddings, Wilson, Banks, the newly elected Speaker of the House, Francis P. Blair, Anson Burlingame. Burlingame's tour was an unceasing ovation; at every station thousands thronged to hear and see the hero who had defied and mastered 'Bully Brooks.' [1] All these speakers had been Whigs, Free-Soilers, Know-Nothings, or anti-Nebraska Democrats; and all spoke the Republican language of that super-heated campaign — spoke of 'Bleeding Kansas,' the stricken Sumner, the aggressive, militant, disunionist 'Slave Power.' Those were the subjects that stirred the people. Hundreds of local speakers made every schoolhouse, every grove, resonant with loud pleas. During the campaign, every Kansan who could speak in public was on the stump in Illinois. Among them was Delahay.[2]

'Bleeding Kansas and the infernal outrage of Brooks' would carry Illinois, the Chief of the Land Department of the Illinois Central Railroad assured Trumbull; do not heed the 'howls of blackguards and ruffians, — demagogues and traitors,' he counselled the Senator. 'I am for the war, and to the end.' [3]

Republican speakers also made answer to the Whig and Democratic charge that the Republican Party was sectional and a deadly menace to the Union. Lincoln did the same thing — indeed this was the heart of the speech he made throughout those excited and ominous months; but while his argument on sectionalism and Union was in matter identical with those

[1] New York *Tribune*, Aug. 15, 1856. 'His speeches [referring to those delivered in Ohio] have been a succession of splendid triumphs,' etc.

[2] 'One Mark W. Delahay, sometime general loafer from Kansas, shrieks for freedom' at a Republican meeting at Carlinville. *Illinois Daily State Register*, Oct. 18, 1856. Six of the best speakers from Kansas were at a single Illinois meeting. *Herald of Freedom*, Feb. 16, 1856.

[3] D. C. Phillips to Trumbull, June 17, 1856. Phillips said that Bissell and Hoffman would be elected because they would get the German vote. Trumbull MSS.

made by Republican speakers and newspapers everywhere, Lincoln stated his argument in simpler fashion and plainer words than was done by any other man. The only parts of his speech that he wrote out for the press were on those subjects.

At Galena, he spoke as if his opponents were facing him in the crowd — an effective trick of oratory which Lincoln favored and used with force and skill. 'You further charge us with being disunionists. . . . It is untrue. . . . Do you find it in our platform, our speeches, our conventions, or anywhere? If not, withdraw the charge.'

What folly, exclaimed Lincoln, was Fillmore's charge that the election of President and Vice President from the same section would necessarily dissolve the Union. The Constitution said nothing about the latitude and longitude of States from which those officials came — it only required that they should come from different States. Did the election of Jackson and Calhoun, both from slave States, dissolve the Union? asked Lincoln. When those places were filled by Tyler of Virginia and King of Alabama, was the Union thereby endangered? At the present moment both offices were occupied by Northern men,[1] 'and the Union stands and will stand. You do not pretend that it ought to dissolve the Union, and the facts show that it won't' — so there was nothing in the disunion charge.

The only thing that might dissolve the Union, said Lincoln, was the restoration of the Missouri Compromise; but it was not likely that that measure would be reënacted, because it would require 'a decided majority' to do it. Even if the Republicans had the power to restore the Compromise, they 'would have no desire to dissolve the Union.'

If it was said that it would be unconstitutional to enact the old restrictions of slavery and that some States would not submit, the answer was that the Supreme Court of the United States alone could decide the question of constitutionality;

[1] Pierce of New Hampshire and Jesse D. Bright of Indiana. William R. King of Alabama, who was elected Vice President with Pierce, had died, and Bright, who was President of the Senate in 1856, was in effect Vice President of the United States.

'and we will submit to its decisions; and if you do also, there will be an end of the matter.' Thus Lincoln in 1856 took the exact ground on which Douglas stood the following year and thereafter. The Democratic press promptly endorsed Lincoln's statement as 'sound,' but said that the Republican Party denied that very doctrine — would Lincoln stand by it in the future? [1]

Would the Democrats accept as final what the Supreme Court might say? asked Lincoln. 'If not, who are the disunionists — you or we?'

But, no matter what happened, exclaimed Lincoln, 'the Union will not be dissolved. We don't want to dissolve it, and if you attempt it we won't let you,' Lincoln again warned the South.

'With the purse and sword, the army, navy, and treasury, in our hands and at our command, you could not do it. This government would be very weak indeed if a majority with a disciplined army and navy and a well-filled treasury, could not preserve itself when attacked by an unarmed, undisciplined, unorganized minority.

'All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, nothing but folly. We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not.' [2] Thus in 1856 Lincoln stated that purpose which he was to carry out as President, the purpose to put down secession by force — if the South should go out of the Union, the North would bring it back at the point of the bayonet.

Douglas, and all Democratic, Whig, and 'American' speakers, as well as newspapers, made short work of the Republican argument that because three Presidents and Vice Presidents had come from the same section without causing disunion then, the same thing would not cause disunion now. Lincoln assumed that 'the political aspect of the country is the same now as it was then,' said the *Conservative*. 'If they are similar, in the name of history, tell us in what?' He said that slavery is the great issue — was 'THAT . . . the all-absorbing question in 1828, in 1840 and 1841? . . . It was not even thought of.' The danger now was the election of a President and Vice President 'as the

[1] *Rock Island Argus*, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, Aug. 11, 1856.

[2] *Works*, II, 292–5.

avowed representatives of a purely sectional principle,' the Whig organ pointed out.

That paper mourned Lincoln's fall. 'We ask all honest men, if this isn't shameful.' He was no longer the Lincoln of old, lamented the Whig paper. 'We have known him too long and too well as a leader in the glorious Whig army. Though gone from us now — lost to us and lost forever, yet there are many glorious recollections of the past around which our memories fondly linger. Many times and oft have our souls been kindled by the burning eloquence that gushed spontaneously from his heart. Time and again have his thrilling words sent new life through every Whig bosom.' There could be but one explanation for the change in Lincoln, the *Conservative* continued; he was now 'drawing his political sustenance from the breast of that diseased old hag abolitionism,' and was 'tainted with the corruptions of his political mother.' [1]

Trouble arose in the new party; the talk was that Bissell wanted Lincoln to take his place as candidate for Governor, Bissell to run for Senator against Douglas in 1858. 'Long' John Wentworth was at the bottom of it, said the Democrats; he wanted to split the friends of Lincoln and Bissell and thus get the Senatorial candidacy for himself. Lincoln flatly said no: it was 'well understood by the party that he is to be the next senator, from the fact that he was defrauded out of it by the last legislature. . . . He has no idea of making room for another renegade democrat, and if the old-line whigs are to be sold out again,' Lincoln 'is done spending his time and money canvassing the state.' [2] So the deal fell through. Although the account of it is partisan, and, of course, inaccurate, something of the kind did take place. Thus were personal ambition and small intrigue present, even in a great national fight over a great national issue.

As the campaign wore on, the charge of Republican sectionalism made pronounced headway. A movement began among the Whigs to follow the advice of Choate and other old time Whig leaders, to support Buchanan in order to avert disunion. To check this tendency, and to save Whig votes for Fillmore, a

[1] *Conservative*, Aug. 21, 1856. [2] *Illinois Daily State Register*, Sept. 5, 1856.

National Whig Convention was held at Baltimore in mid-September. Delegates came from twenty-six States.[1]

It was a solemn assemblage of earnest men, moved wholly by fear for the Union. The chairman was Edward Bates of Missouri, who was to be Lincoln's first Attorney General. The Convention promptly and unanimously ratified the Know-Nothing, or 'American' ticket, Fillmore and Donelson, and adopted a platform that stated in grave terms the issue of the hour: a party, 'founded only on geographical distinctions,' would surely destroy the Union because the Nation was made up of 'widespread' sections with different climates, different products, and different 'social and domestic institutions.'

It was an 'absolute necessity' to avoid geographical parties — that was a 'fundamental article' of Whig faith. Washington saw clearly the danger of such parties; his warning against them was being 'fearfully' justified by the sectional strife now going on; and that terrible and foolish strife must be stopped at once, or the Union was lost.

All lovers of the Constitution must 'look with alarm' on the two major political parties now in the field — 'one claiming only to represent sixteen northern States, and the other appealing mainly to the passions and the prejudices of the Southern States.' The success of either would ruin the country. The only way to prevent that catastrophe was to elect as President a man who held each section in equal regard, and was pledged to neither.

Such a man was Fillmore, asserted the Whigs. Regardless of the 'peculiar doctrines' of the party which had already nominated him, Fillmore was an ideal candidate in the present crisis — wise, moderate, experienced, firm, with 'calm, pacific temperament,' but a vigorous executive who was whole-heartedly devoted to the Constitution and, far above all other merits, not connected with either of the sectional parties 'now struggling for political supremacy.' [2]

In short, the National Whigs, formally and as a party, made

[1] Only California, Iowa, Michigan, Texas, and Wisconsin were not represented. McKee, 94.

[2] McKee, 94–6.

the preservation of the Union, imperilled by sectional parties, their one great issue — their only issue. And it was an issue that appealed to masses of conservative Union men in the South as well as in the North — to more in the South, indeed, than in the North as the election showed.

But the Republicans gained strength every day. The Kansas relief organization permeated every Northern State, every county, well-nigh every township. Great numbers of women were among its agents.[1] The majority of Protestant ministers, except those of the Episcopal Church, preached for it, talked for it, worked for it.[2] For the first time in a national political campaign, preachers, as such, and women, as such, took active part. 'Among the strongest aids of the Black Republican party . . . may be numbered the Pulpit and Petticoats,' snarled the *Indianapolis State Sentinel* after the election.[3] All these efforts aided the Republican cause. In practical results on votes the Kansas organization and that of the new party were one.

During August matters in Kansas became so bad that the President removed Shannon and sent a strong, just, and able man to put down violence, restore order, establish peace. His name was John White Geary of Pennsylvania. He was well fitted for his hard task,[4] and well he did it.

Before he reached his post he saw Governor Sterling Price of Missouri, and through the efforts of the two men the blockade of the Missouri River was lifted and that waterway again opened to all immigrants.[5] In Kansas itself the new Governor found a saturnalia of lawlessness and ruffianism — acting Governor Woodson had proclaimed the Territory to be in a state of

[1] *Aurora Guardian*, Aug. 7, Oct. 9, Oct. 23; *Aurora Daily Beacon*, Sept. 17; *Rockford Republican*, Oct. 16, Oct. 23, 1856.

[2] This had been going on since 1854. *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Sept. 17, 1854.

[3] Nov. 13, 1856.

[4] Geary was a civil engineer and had studied law. He commanded a Pennsylvania regiment in the Mexican War and was wounded in battle; and, because of cool-headed gallantry, was made military governor of Mexico City when that place was occupied by the American forces. He was given practical control of San Francisco from the acquisition of California until a State Constitution was formed, when he was elected the first Mayor of the City. Geary was thirty-seven years old when he became Governor of Kansas.

[5] Gihon, 103.

rebellion. Under Geary's orders, United States troops put an end to guerilla warfare, suppressed marauders, protected peaceable citizens. In doing so he was as impartial as he was stern — both sides were treated alike. As the Presidential election drew near peace had been restored and normal conditions were well under way.[1]

But Geary's work in Kansas did not soften the language of Republican press and spokesmen in the political campaign. Rather the progressive establishment of law and order by Federal soldiers inflamed Republican denunciation and appeal. Here, said stump speakers and newspapers, was fresh evidence that the 'Slave Power,' through its tool, Franklin Pierce, was using the Army of the United States to crush freedom in Kansas. Because he did not take their side pro-slavery men in Missouri and Kansas were even more bitter toward Geary. The South, as a section, was comparatively silent — almost it may be said to have been resigned to the now plainly inevitable outcome. Thus the campaign raged on.

From the beginning of the Presidential contest Republican meetings had been clamorous and large, and as the weeks and months went by those gatherings became greater and more earnest. Indeed, they finally exceeded in numbers and enthusiasm those of the Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign of 1840, which they so much resembled.

Along the dusty roads stretching through the vast prairies, slowly rolled big wagons filled with whole families on their way to hear noted speakers.[2] Rural fife and drum corps shrilled and rattled. Cavalcades of young men and women wearing gay sashes and liberty caps rode proudly in long parades. At night meetings in towns a new feature attracted lively interest — in the processions companies of youths, wearing uniforms, carried torches. They cheered vociferously on the slightest pretext or without any pretext at all, and were as ready to fight as to

[1] *Gihon*, 204, 214. 'No sooner had the war ceased, in September last, on the arrival of Gov. Geary, than our people engaged at once in their usual avocations.' *Herald of Freedom*, Dec. 20, 1856.

[2] The custom of farmers going long distances with their families and 'hired men' to attend party 'rallies' continued throughout the seventies. Often these meetings would last two or three days.

cheer. They were called the 'Wide Awakes.'[1] Presently we shall see them marching to war at Lincoln's call.

Songs by glee clubs, the assemblages often joining in the chorus, were a big feature of the campaign — and a big factor. In most of these songs, with Kansas as the motif, the militant note was sharply struck. Examples are:

'March! we have sworn to support her,
The prayers of the righteous shall speed us,
A chief never conquered shall lead us —
Frémont shall lead the Free!

'Then from the fields red with slaughter,
Slavery's hordes shall be driven,
Freedom to Kansas be given,
Frémont shall make her Free! Hurrah!'[2]

The chorus of a warlike Frémont song was sung by vast audiences at tremendous Republican meetings in the larger cities of the North, to the tune of the Marseillaise. When thousands of voices thus united in the singing of the inspiring words and air the enthusiasm often became indescribable:

'Arise, arise, ye brave!
And let your war cry be!
Free Speech, Free Press, Free Soil, Free Men,
FRE-MONT AND VICTORY.'[3]

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[1] For origin and significance of the 'Wide Awakes,' see p. 224, *supra*.

[2] 'I have never seen such a belligerent spirit manifested.' A. S. Palmer, Geneva, Wis., to Trumbull, July 7, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[3] New York *Times*, *Herald*, *Tribune*, June 26, 1856, describing Frémont ratification meeting in New York, June 25, 1856. *Times*' account clipped in *Liberator*, July 4, 1856.

Another popular song was called 'BULLY BROOKS'S SONG, As sung by himself, at a private meeting of his friends in Washington, immediately after his attempted assassination of Sumner. Old Uncle Butler presiding.' It was very long. Typical verses are:

'O! my name is BULLY BROOKS,
Bully Brooks, Brooks, Brooks;
O! my name is Bully Brooks,
Ha-ha! ha-ha!
I've strength, if not good looks,
Know bludgeons if not books,
And am the dirtiest of Brooks,
By far — by far!
[Interrupted by drunken chorus from the company:]

The Whigs and 'Americans,' too, were hearty singers. One of their songs, 'THE UNION MARSEILLAISE,' spiritedly expressed, in many verses, the supreme issue as the Whigs saw it:

'Awake! ye men who love your nation —
Her starry standard boldly raise!
Disunion threats its desolation,
And Faction lights her dreadful blaze!
O! shall we tamely list to treason,
And hear our glorious land decried —
Her laws — her charter — all defied
By zealots void of truth or reason?

Chorus: 'Arise! Americans!
The UNION — 'tis your own!
March on! March on! all hearts as one! —
Fillmore and Donelson!' [1]

'Then three cheers for Bully Brooks,
Bully Brooks, Brooks, Brooks!
And three for Bully Keitt,
Hip-hip-hurrah!
Tho' they flogg'd their very mothers,
Stabb'd their sisters or their brothers,
They could count upon the South-ers,
Hurrah! hurrah!'
New York Evening Post, clipped in the *Liberator*, July 4, 1856.

[1] *Conservative*, Aug. 28, 1856.
Another of the many Whig songs, THE NATION'S SONG (Tune — 'Few Days'), was sung at the great Whig meeting at Springfield. It ran:

'Our cause is brightening every day,
Few days, few days,
So "Buck" and Frémont clear the way,
Fillmore's going home;
"Old Buck" is but a quarter nag,
Few days, few days,
And the "Mustang" now begins to fag,
Fillmore's going home.
Oh! the Locos now are sighing,
Few days, few days,
They see there's no use trying
Fillmore's going home.' — *Ib.*, Aug. 21, 1856.

An 'American song' was:

'There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming,
There's a good time coming, boys,
Wait a little longer!
For we shall live to see the day,
When Americans shall have full sway,
In the good time coming!' — *Ib.*, Oct. 2, 1856.

Republican gatherings at important towns were very large — often ten thousand people went to them. Lincoln spoke at one at Princeton where more than that number came.[1] When Trumbull spoke at Jacksonville, the procession was over a mile and a quarter long.[2] A Republican meeting at Danville numbered fifteen thousand and lasted two days.[3] Early in October, twenty thousand attending the State Fair at Alton, together with the population of the town, made up one of the greatest meetings ever seen in the West. Lincoln was the speaker of the day, and the torch-light procession, the bands, the cheering, were immense.[4] A demonstration at Jacksonville, where Lincoln, Herndon, and others spoke from several different stands, was so big and enthusiastic that 'the like was never before equalled in the State.' [5]

In cities, especially at capitals, scores of thousands from all over the State attended Frémont meetings. At a Frémont 'celebration' at Beloit, Wisconsin, thirty thousand came from that State and Illinois, the procession was seven miles long, and in it were two thousand wagons filled with farmers.[6] A Frémont 'rally' at Indianapolis in the middle of July was typical of all in the Frémont campaign, whether held in country, town, or city — typical of the crowds, the spectacles, the frenzy. Special trains, wagons, horses, boats, brought fifty to sixty thousand people at least, reported the *Chicago Tribune*. The procession was hours in passing a given point. A single delegation numbered four thousand five hundred men. Twenty-four Marshals assisted the Grand Marshal. Fifty bands played. Continuous cheers arose. From windows along Washington Street and from the roofs of hotels were 'thousands of fair

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 11, 1856.

[2] *Ib.*, Sept. 29, 1856.

[3] *Ib.*, Aug. 25; *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, Aug. 30, 1856.

[4] *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, Oct. 4, 1856.

[5] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Nov. 3, 1856. The Democrats intimated that the expense for these displays and attractions — free dinners, bands, half fare on railroads, etc. — was 'paid for possibly out of the Kansas fund.' *Rushville* (Ill.) *Times*, Sept. 26, 1856.

[6] *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, Sept. 5, 1856. Everywhere the Republican meetings were very big. One at Muncie, Ind., numbered 20,000. *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Sept. 30, 1856.

ladies, waving handkerchiefs.' Great flags were suspended across the streets. All day long cannon roared.

The procession was gay with floats. One in the form of a canoe, carried '*thirty-two* beautiful young ladies,' all but one dressed in white, representing the States, while one, 'a very fair girl' shrouded in black crape, personified Kansas. On a banner above the young women was the legend 'OPPOSITION TO OLD BACHELORS.'

A great ball, fifteen feet in diameter, was rolled by a score of men. It was the 'Ball of Freedom,' but was covered with devices showing economic demands: a train of cars (the Pacific railroad) drawn by an engine labelled 'Frémont' which 'was knocking a "Buck" off the track;' another declared for 'Improvement to Rivers and Harbors.' Hundreds of banners had pictures and mottoes expressive of popular Republican thought; a man skinning a buck — 'Frémont the Hunter;' a mustang kicking off a buck's horns; a Border Ruffian holding a rope looped about the neck of a Free-State man who exclaimed 'I die for Freedom;' 'Hoosiers will go for the Pacific Railroad;' 'The White House no Place for an Old Bachelor.'

One section of the parade was made up of Germans. On their banners, and, in their language, were such phrases as 'Free men in the Republic,' 'No man is the property of another,' 'Freedom in a Free State,' 'Let a man be a man,' 'Let the Slave be free,' 'Free Speech and Free Press.'

After the speaking where many orators harangued the crowds from five different stands, another procession of young Republicans, got up to expose 'Democracy,' came down Washington Street. Most were on horseback led by the Devil in black, with horns, cloven feet, and long tail, holding a banner inscribed, 'My works do follow me.' Behind him in a big wagon was Pierce and his cabinet, and after them, mounted on horses, mules, and jackasses, rode two hundred Border Ruffians, outlandishly dressed and armed with all kinds of weapons. Eight oxen drew a boiler in lieu of a cannon.

Then, in another wagon came 'BRIGHAM YOUNG with six wives most fashionably dressed, hoop-skirts and all, each with a little Brigham in her arms,' the Mormon chieftain holding a

banner, 'HURRAH FOR THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL — IT INTRODUCES POLYGAMY AND SLAVERY.' Still another wagon bore a group — 'Bully Brooks' beating prostrate Sumner with a club. At night a torch-light procession two miles long, the marchers four abreast, headed by five brass bands, made Washington Street look like a river of fire, while the thunder of artillery was scarce loud enough to drown the cheers.[1]

No Republican meeting, big or little, was without such entertaining features. In country towns barbecues were a favorite mode of campaign cheer, and throngs gathered about roasted oxen in hilarity and hunger as well as with fervor for freedom. Always the Buchanan-Old Bachelor mottoes appeared; always the floats of girls in white, wreaths of flowers about their brows, with one in black — the States and Kansas; and, sometimes over them floated a great banner with the lines in large letters,

> Who ever heard in all his life,
> Of a candidate without a wife?'[2]

Often the reverse of the 'OLD BACHELOR' legend was personified in a way that vastly pleased onlookers — the prettiest girl to be found, as 'Queen of Hearts,' represented 'adored Jessie,' Frémont's lovely and spirited wife.[3] She was the daughter of Benton and, when she was fifteen had eloped with the gallant explorer, who was then twenty-eight.[4] No matter! said Republicans; 'the course of true love never did run smooth.' And had not her parents forgiven them? Who was prouder of his son-in-law than Benton? At any rate, Frémont was not an 'old bachelor.' So 'John and Jessie forever! Hurrah!' Thus another element of romance was added to the Republican standard bearer.

But all was not praise for the 'Pathfinder,' the fighter, the lover; detraction made free with him, too. Frémont's father

[1] Indianapolis Correspondence, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 15, clipped in New York *Times*, July 21, 1856.

[2] *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, Oct. 11, 1856, describing a Frémont rally at Peoria, where Lincoln spoke.

[3] *Era:* Cole, 148; *Rushville* (Ill.) *Times*, Sept. 26, 1856.

[4] They were married Oct. 19, 1841. Protestant clergymen refused to perform the ceremony, but the infatuated couple persisted and finally were married by a Catholic priest, one father Horsey, at Georgetown.

was a French adventurer, who, after long and thrilling experiences, reached Norfolk, Virginia. There he taught French, and made love to a beautiful and passionate young woman who was the wife of a rich old man, an officer of the Revolution. A divorce resulted, she married Frémont, and the two made off in a wagon on a journey among the Indians of the Southern States, camping by the roadside on their way. At one such stop near Savannah John C. Frémont was born.

When he became the Republican candidate, these facts were raked up. It was said that the father never took out naturalization papers, never became an American citizen; that the birth of the son was irregular; that the marriage came too late. In a speech in Richmond Governor Wise of Virginia publicly charged that Frémont was '*born illegitimately in a neighboring State, if not ill begotten in this very city.*' [1] All over the South that accusation was believed, and so much was said about it in the North, that Frémont newspapers took note of it. Even if true, what difference did it make? asked the New York *Times* in a long, leading editorial; it was not Frémont's fault in any case.

Thus, while Kansas and Freedom were made the dominant note of all Republican meetings, the domestic lives of Buchanan and of Frémont were contrasted, and this personal phase was appreciable in the campaign. Far stronger were attacks on Mormonism and polygamy. But next to the stricken Territory, Border Ruffians, and the arrogant Slaveocracy as personified by 'Bully Brooks,' the most effective Republican appeal was economic. No meeting, no procession was without reference to the Pacific railroad and to the improvement of rivers and harbors.

Nor were increasing hard times without influence — very great influence. It needed only the climax of this growing financial distress, which came in the North (though not in the South) the very next year in the panic of 1857, and the declaration for a protective tariff to foster Northern manufacturers, which the Republicans neglected to make in 1856 — it needed only these

[1] New York *Times*, Oct. 6; *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Oct. 28, 1856. 'Tell me if the hoisting of the black flag over you by a Frenchman's bastard, while the arms of civil war are already clashing, is not to be deemed an overt act and a declaration of war?'

things, in addition to anti-slavery agitation and the other factors enumerated to make Republican victory thereafter certain in the North.

But in the Frémont campaign the 'talking points' of the new party were liberty, monogamy, and 'righteousness' in general. 'Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Speech, Free Men, Frémont' was the Republican motto and battle cry.[1]

Democratic meetings were also vociferous, also big. At one in Jacksonville there were 'Democrats by acres,' and the shouts and cheers were absolutely deafening.[2] Douglas spoke to six thousand people at Bloomington,[3] to ten thousand at Decatur.[4] Always his theme was 'the Constitution and the Union' which, said he, the 'Black Republican Party' would destroy, and the maintenance of law which it flouted. Indeed, the Douglas Democracy of 1856 preached the Union, and talked the Union, more than did the Republicans; and we shall see such Northern Democrats, under Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief, make good their faith on battlefields. Their bitterest partisan charge now was that the new party consisted of the 'woolly host of disunion.' [5]

The *State Register* boasted that twenty thousand came to hear Douglas at Springfield; the roads to the capital were crowded for miles. The parade far exceeded any like procession by the Republicans in Central Illinois. Besides bands of music from Springfield and towns in adjacent counties, one came from St. Louis. A float covered with blue cloth spangled with stars carried little girls representing the States; while on the biggest float was a large gilded eagle and a great banner on which was inscribed in golden letters: 'THE UNION: THE FATHERS OF '76 WON IT. FATHERS OF 1856 PRESERVE IT.' [6]

Nor were the Whig and Know-Nothing meetings small. Indeed, throughout Central and Southern Illinois they rivalled those of the Democrats and far exceeded those of the Republi-

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 147.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Register*, Sept. 15, 1856.

[3] *Ib.*, Sept. 18, 1856. [4] *Ib.*, Oct. 13, 1856. [5] *Ib.*, July 29, 1856.

[6] *Ib.*, Sept. 19, 1856. Other Democratic mottoes were: 'Keep Step to the Music of the Union'; 'White Supremacy'; 'No Negro Equality'; 'The Constitution is our Highest Law,' etc.

cans in numbers and noise. On October 10 they held a meeting at Springfield attended by fifteen or twenty thousand [1] — 'ten times larger than the Frémont gathering and something less than the democratic gathering recently held here,' gleefully reported the Douglas organ. 'One thing is evident,' continued the *State Register;* 'Lincoln has met with a perfect rout in Sangamon.' He, Herndon, and others 'have found out, by this demonstration, that the old line whigs cannot be governed exclusively by the negro question.' [2] And so it turned out. On the cold, rainy election day, Buchanan carried Sangamon County by more than two to one over Frémont, who got nearly five hundred fewer votes even than Fillmore.[3]

In this political state of things, Lincoln went to every meeting he could reach, where he thought he could make votes. Everywhere his tall, bony figure rose above the crowds. Always men thronged about him to hear his peculiar tales, laughing uproariously and slapping thighs. From a distance women admired. When time came for him to speak, off went Lincoln's coat and stock, revealing his trousers, always too short, held by a knit gallus, perhaps attached to the 'pants' by a peg instead of a button, his long, scrawny neck protruding from a cotton shirt that opened behind.

His sentences were short, words plain, illustrations familiar and simple, and in his speech and manner there was never the least trace of the pompous. Others spoke mostly of atrocities, horrors, reeking bludgeons, blood-thirsty 'Ruffians' — of anything that could arouse passion and stir up hatred. But not Lincoln! Although he made plain the wrong of slavery and the necessity that Kansas must be free, no abuse fell from his lips. If any fault can be found with his speeches in the Frémont campaign, it is his frequent reference to 'that man Douglas,' made in the temper of Lincoln's attack on Douglas in 1852.[4]

No matter how many spoke at any meeting, Lincoln sur-

[1] *Conservative,* Oct. 16, 1856. [2] *Illinois Daily State Register,* Oct. 11, 1856.

[3] *Ib.,* Nov. 7, 1856. Buchanan, 2475; Fillmore, 1612; Frémont, 1174.

[4] See Chap. III of this volume.

The *Illinois State Journal,* beginning in June, 1856, published a series of anonymous letters to 'B. Arnold Douglas,' and that name was frequently used in its news items and editorials.

passed the best of them. At Belleville, for instance, where Trumbull and four others addressed great throngs, the local paper declared that 'the palm, however, belongs to Mr. Lincoln.' He even did better than at the Bloomington Convention, the editor assured the 'delighted thousands' who heard him at Belleville.[1]

Lincoln's principal theme was the Constitution and freedom, liberty, and Union. He recited Webster's grand peroration in his reply to Hayne, albeit without giving Webster credit.[2] His main appeal was for the preservation of the Union without war, if possible, but, if necessary, by force.

He made the same speech everywhere; but when he could do so without scaring away Whig voters, Lincoln put in the assertion that the Nation could not continue to exist half slave and half free. No report has been found that he used the Biblical quotation, 'A house divided against itself cannot stand,' but, throughout the campaign, whenever politically expedient, he made the point.

Everywhere Lincoln was careful to answer the Whig and Democratic charge that the new party was sectional and a menace to the Union. Again and at greater length he wrote out for the press that part of his speech.

'More than all others,' said Lincoln, that charge caused opponents of slavery extension 'to hesitate' to vote for Frémont; 'practically, it is the most difficult objection we have to meet.' What was the real issue between the parties led respectively by Buchanan and Frémont? 'Simply this: "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into United States territories now legally free?" Buchanan says it shall, and Frémont says it shall not.'

That was the 'naked issue and the whole of it,' he insisted. Of course each party made charges against the other of ulterior designs; 'but as these charges cannot be fully proved either way,' let them be dismissed and the discussion confined to the main issue.

[1] *Belleville Advocate*, Oct. 22, 1856.

[2] 'I heard him.' Democratic letter from Petersburg to *Illinois Daily State Register*, Sept. 1, in issue Sept. 4, 1856.

On that question — slavery extension — how was one side more sectional than the other? Lincoln asked. If both were equally sectional, national men gained nothing by changing sides. The alternative was simple — let those who were for slavery extension go to Buchanan, and those who were against it go to Frémont.

The fact that both the Republican candidates were from free States, meant 'excessive sectionalism' to some men and they became angry and excited about it; but, said Lincoln, 'the Constitution remains calm — keeps cool — upon the subject.' The Constitution did not say that one candidate must come from a slave State and the other from a free State. That had been the custom, he admitted, but it had not always been done. Again Lincoln gave the three examples that he had given at Galena.

Suppose Frémont's friends did expect to elect him, if at all, 'principally by free-State votes?' So did 'Buchanan's friends expect to elect him, if at all, chiefly by slave-State votes.'

It was true, conceded Lincoln, that the Republicans could get no votes in the slave States, while the Democrats would get most of their votes in the South, and a great many in the North, too. It was that fact which gave most color to the charge that the Republican Party was sectional.

Why was it so? asked Lincoln. Surely not because of any difference in the 'mental or moral structure of the people North and South.' The real reason, he insisted, was that the Southern people have 'an immediate palpable and immensely great pecuniary interest, while with the people of the North it is merely an abstract question of moral right, with only slight and remote pecuniary interest added.'

The slaves were worth 'a thousand million dollars' and their market value would be doubled if slavery were extended, Lincoln argued. That was why the Southern people were united 'as one man' for slavery extension. But the Northern people were moved by 'moral principle' alone — a 'looser bond than pecuniary interest,' which influenced the people of the South.

'Right here is the cause of their perfect union and our want of it,' said Lincoln. And see how it worked in politics! If a

Southern man wished to be President, the South choked him down, so that the prize could be 'held up on Southern terms to the greedy eyes of Northern ambition.' Thus Democratic conventions had become mere auctions where the South knocked down Presidential nominations to the highest bidder.

Lincoln then gave his long and pet illustration of how the Democratic politicians ruled by the South, kept their voters in line by the cry, 'stand by the party' and 'support party measures.' See how Douglas had in that way wrung from the Legislature approval of his Kansas-Nebraska bill — an endorsement 'given, not in the sense of right, but in the teeth of a sense of wrong, to sustain Douglas.' By the same method, New England had been divided with Pierce, Michigan with Cass, Pennsylvania with Buchanan — 'and all for the Democratic party.'

Yet, after thus dividing the North, the Democrats call the Republicans sectional! exclaimed Lincoln. The impudence of it! It would be funny if it were not so serious.

Lincoln closed with grave words, portentous words. Taken with his letter to Robertson, and his statements at Bloomington and Galena, they could mean but one thing:

'This *is* a sectional question — that is to say, it is a question in its nature calculated to divide the American people geographically. . . . Who is to blame for that? Who can help it?

'Either side can help it; [1] but how? Simply by yielding to the other side; there is no other way; in the whole range of possibility there is no other way.

'Then, which side shall yield? To this again, there can be but one answer — the side which is in the wrong. . . .

'Let all who really think slavery ought to be spread into free territory, openly go over against us; there is where they rightfully belong. But why should any go who really think slavery ought not to spread?

'Do they really think the right ought to yield to the wrong? Are they afraid to stand by the right?

'Do they fear that the Constitution is too weak to sustain them in the right? Do they really think that by right surrender-

[1] In all editions of Lincoln's Works the word 'help' is printed 'hold.' This was an error of the typesetter of the country newspaper; and the mistake has been copied.

ing to wrong the hopes of our Constitution, our Union, and our liberties can possibly be bettered.' [1]

Not by speeches alone, did Lincoln appeal to the unwilling Whigs. Among thousands of them was rising that old party spirit to which Lincoln himself had in former times so often and so passionately appealed. Whig meetings were becoming larger and more frequent. Even Herndon was alarmed, although he looked upon the Fillmore movement as a split, 'considerable and deep,' between the Republicans 'or Anti-Nebraska men' and the Know-Nothings.[2] Judd thought that in Central Illinois the Republicans were more like 'guerillas than regular soldiers.' [3] Something had to be done more intimate and effective than speeches. Lincoln did it.

He wrote personal letters to Whig friends, striving to prove that the race was between Frémont and Buchanan, and that a vote for Fillmore would help the Democratic candidate. No wonder the Democrats were glad that so many Whigs were supporting Fillmore — 'they know where the shoe pinches.' Lincoln said that he understood the relative strength of the three parties in Illinois 'as well as any one man does,' and he predicted that Buchanan would win solely because the opposition to him was divided between Frémont and Fillmore, whereas Bissell was sure of election because Whigs and Republicans were united in support of him.[4]

But there was no time to write many of these letters and hosts of Whigs needed such personal attention. So Lincoln got up a circular letter, wrote the word 'Confidential' at the top of it, the Republican State Committee had it carefully lithographed and, from Springfield, it was sent to leading Whigs. It was an amazing performance.

'Every vote withheld from Frémont and given to Fillmore in this State actually lessens Fillmore's chance of being President,'

[1] *Works*, II, 299–307.

[2] Herndon to Trumbull, July 29, 1856. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Judd to Palmer, Aug. 3, 1856. *Ib.*

[4] Lincoln to John Bennett, Aug. 4, 1856. *Works*, II, 295–6.

'He [Lincoln] had a more accurate knowledge of public opinion in central Illinois than any other man who visited the Committee rooms.' *Address:* White, 20. White was Secretary of the Republican State Central Committee.

he wrote. For if Buchanan got all the slave States, Pennsylvania, 'and *any* other State,' he would be elected; but if Fillmore won in Maryland and Kentucky, Buchanan would be beaten, the election would be thrown into the House of Representatives, and Fillmore *might* be chosen. If, however, the Fillmore men should 'throw away . . . on him' enough votes in Indiana and Illinois to give those States to Buchanan, that would more than make up for his loss of Maryland and Kentucky.

This, argued Lincoln, 'is as plain as adding up the weight of three small hogs.' Since Fillmore had 'no possible chance' to win in Illinois, the best thing for him was 'to let Frémont take it,' and thus keep it out of the hands of Buchanan.

'Buchanan is the hard horse to beat in this race,' Lincoln wrote to his Whig friends. 'Let him have Illinois, and nothing can beat him; and he will get Illinois if men persist in throwing away votes upon Mr. Fillmore.'

It was sheer nonsense to suppose that Fillmore could carry the State, said Lincoln. Look at the newspapers against Buchanan; all were for Frémont save, indeed, three or four which were for Fillmore. That was a 'fair index of the proportion of the votes.' At least two of the Fillmore papers were maintained, partly at least, by Democrats — and no wonder, for 'they know the Fillmore movement helps them, and therefore they help it.' [1]

But alas for the well meant if devious plan! An accident of politics upset it. Worse still, that political mischance caused many of the ungodly to laugh at Lincoln, and the incident did him no good then or thereafter.

At a country Whig meeting in a grove an old Whig called several of his party friends aside to consult with them about something which, he said, puzzled and troubled him. He pledged them to secrecy for, said he, the matter was 'confidential' — no one must know about it. All promised to be discreet, to be silent.

Gravely the old farmer took from his pocket Lincoln's letter, and carefully unfolding it, handed it to one of the group. He

[1] Lincoln to Harrison Maltby, Springfield, Sept. 8, 1856. 'Confidential.' *Works*, II, 297–8. At the time Lincoln wrote this letter, it had been suggested by the *Richmond Whig* that the election might be thrown into the House. *New York Herald*, Aug. 11, 1856 — long editorial. The *Herald* vigorously supported Frémont.

began to read, then stopped, laughed and passed the letter on with like result. Soon all were chuckling and each took from his pocket an identical letter.[1]

In due time, the story reached Springfield. The town grinned — the joke was on Lincoln. The *State Register* rejoiced and denounced; the *Conservative* spat venom. Here, said both papers, was the apostle of righteousness and fair dealing, caught at a cheap campaign trick unworthy of a bad schoolboy. 'We pity Mr. Lincoln, for verily his abolition taskmasters are requiring dirty work at his hands,' sneered the Democratic organ, when publishing 'this precious "confidential" document.' [2]

A Coles County Whig and Know-Nothing wrote an open letter to the two Springfield papers: 'Who ever heard of such treachery before?' The Fillmore men 'infinitely prefer the election of Buchanan to the election of the woolly horse.[3] . . . The Frémont party . . . are on their last legs, or Abe Lincoln, Lovejoy, Wentworth, and other unscrupulous and corrupt demagogues in our state, would not write and send broadcast over Illinois their secret and patchie appeals to . . . delude and seduce the Fillmore men into the support of their mongrel abolition ticket.' [4]

Such, said the *Conservative*, was the response of honest men 'to the secret and "confidential" lithographed circular which Mr. Lincoln, the leading Republican candidate for Elector and prospective candidate for the United States Senate, is scattering broad-cast over the country by this under-ground process. . . . So far as we can learn, Lincoln's silly circular has been a flash in the pan.' [5]

The arguments set out in these letters were also a part of Lincoln's speech at meetings where many Whigs came. And he

[1] The *Conservative*, Oct. 16, 1856.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Register*, Oct. 13, 1856.

[3] Frémont. A shrewd Yankee found in Maryland a horse 'with a remarkable coat of hair — long, shaggy, and bearing a striking resemblance to wool.' He exhibited it in Washington as a 'woolly horse' which had been taken on the plains by Colonel Frémont and was regarded as the 'greatest living curiosity of the age.' Benton denounced the show as a fraud and had the exhibitor thrown into prison. *Bench and Bar of Missouri:* W. V. N. Bay, 12–3.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Register*, Oct. 14; *Conservative*, Oct. 16, 1856.

[5] *Ib.*, Oct. 16, 1856.

made still another point everywhere — a point which appealed with tremendous power to farmers, and to all wage-earners who, as such, had begun to show class consciousness and to organize. For the first time in our history bids for the labor vote, as such, were made. He spoke, not for the black man, said Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire in a speech at Galesburg, Illinois, but for the 'fair haired, ruddy cheeked Saxon — to plead the cause of the laboring class' which was endangered by slavery.[1] So, too, spoke most Republican orators — free labor must be saved from the 'Slave Power,' and therefore must vote for Frémont. Lincoln said the same thing, and meant it.

The opportunity for making these appeals to labor, as a class, was furnished by the increasing financial stringency and unemployment throughout the North. Also, the Republicans charged that Buchanan had said that ten cents a day was enough for the workingman; and small, feeble, and void of imagination was the Republican procession that was without a wagon filled with ragged, starving laborers toiling at various jobs with a tattered sign over them '*Buchanan Workshop: Ten Cents a Day.*'[2] It was a frank class appeal and was a vital part of the Republican campaign. '10 cent Jimmy,' the *Indianapolis Journal* called the Democratic candidate in an abusive editorial on Buchanan's hatred of the 'working classes.'[3]

But the pretext for arousing Northern labor against the 'Slaveocracy' and Buchanan, lay in certain wild statements then appearing in a small group of the Southern press. Six or seven papers in that section, all of them as radical for slavery as the *Liberator* was for emancipation, had accepted the theory of Fitzhugh's book and were advocating it — the theory that slavery was the natural and necessary condition of all labor regardless of color, and that capital should own labor.[4] All such editorials that could be found were collected, and Republican papers printed them under alarming headlines.

[1] *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, Oct. 27, 1856.

[2] *Ib.*, Oct. 11, 1856, and other Frémont papers during the campaign. Such a burlesque was a conspicuous feature of the great Frémont procession at Indianapolis, described in the text.

[3] *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Sept. 27, 1856.

[4] See p. 31, *supra*.

The *State Journal* made display of them with the caption 'THE BUCHANAN DEMOCRACY HATE FREEDOM:' 'The laws of the slave States justify the holding of white men in bondage;' The North is 'burdened with a servile class of mechanics and laborers, unfit for self-government;' 'Master and slave is a relation in society as necessary as that of parent and child; . . . If free society be unnatural, immoral, unchristian, it must fall and give way to a slave society — a system as old as the world. . . . Two opposite and conflicting forms of society cannot, among civilized men, co-exist and endure. The one must give way and cease to exist — the other become universal' — such were statements credited to Southern papers by name.[1] 'What balderdash!' cried the *State Register;*[2] but with much effect Lincoln made use of them.[3]

The worst of these excerpts he cut out and pasted in his campaign scrap-book. It was a paragraph from a small country paper in Alabama, the *Muscogee Herald.*[4] 'Free society! We sicken of the name! What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small fisted farmers, and moonstruck theorists? All the Northern and especially the New England States, are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel, and small farmers who do their own drudgery; and yet who are hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body-servant. This is your free society which the Northern hordes are endeavoring to extend into Kansas.'

But merely to print such matter in the party press and to quote it on the stump was not enough to suit Lincoln. Demo-

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal,* July 30, Aug. 19, Oct. 15, 1856.

[2] Aug. 1, 1856.

[3] An editorial in the *State Journal,* Aug. 19, 1856, probably written by Lincoln, said: 'The southern aristocrats . . . stick up their noses at our free laborers. . . . At the north . . . a man is regarded *for what he is.* . . . The southern party who now are supporting Mr. Buchanan . . . do not stop with exhibitions of their superfluous and sneering contempt for free laborers, but they even advocate that the honest toiler should be reduced to the same degradation with their slaves. . . .

'Laborers, mechanics, artisans, merchants, clerks! What reply do you give to such insults as these.'

[4] Clipped in *ib.,* Oct. 15, 1856.

cratic papers scoffed and Democratic speakers jeered at it as unfair, if not untruthful. Also, the Whigs took little or no stock in it. Herndon showed to Lincoln an article in the *Richmond Enquirer* endorsing the principle that the enslavement of either whites or blacks was justifiable and right. If only 'some of these Illinois newspapers would champion that,' it could be made use of with greater effect, Lincoln confided to his partner. Herndon said he could manage it; he was a friend of the editor of a 'pro-slavery organ' in Springfield, and would get him to do that very thing.

All right, 'go in,' said Lincoln. So the *Conservative* printed the 'white slave' passage from the *Richmond Enquirer*, although with a blazing editorial denouncing it.[1] For the rest of the campaign, Lincoln used the incident 'with telling effect.' The editor found out who played the 'trick' upon him, relates Herndon, and thereafter neither he nor Lincoln could ever get 'another line in the paper.' [2]

Thus throughout the North, with argument and song, with blare of bands, rattle of drums and roar of cannon, with parading and cheering and banners and mottoes and devices of burlesque, with torchlight processions and uniformed companies marching as to war, with charges of sectionalism and counter charges of disunion, with many a trick by all sides, the campaign of 1856 came to an end.

In comparison, the South had been quiet — dangerously quiet. Even the strident voices of 'fire-eaters' did not arouse general display of Southern emotion, when contrasted with the thunderous response to inflammatory incitement of Northern feeling. But the Southern mind was made up, Southern purpose fixed. If the Nation were to be ruled by a sectional Administration, the South would set up for itself.

That this would happen four years later, was made almost certain by the result of the election. Buchanan won by a narrow margin, a margin almost sure to be wiped out in 1860. Although the Democratic candidate got a heavy vote in every Northern State, he carried only four States in that section, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Illinois. Frémont won in all other

[1] Aug. 28, 1856. [2] Herndon, II, 370–1.

Northern States, but he lost California, by more than two to one. Even Fillmore beat Frémont by over sixteen thousand votes in the State of the Pathfinder's principal exploits — but California had only four electoral votes anyway. In the whole South fewer than a thousand votes were cast for the standard bearer of the 'Sectional Party,' as the anti-Republican Whigs, 'Americans,' and Democrats everywhere, as well as the whole Southern people, then called the Republicans.[1]

Moreover, the three Northern States that gave Buchanan the victory were moving with speed toward the Republican Party. While Illinois, for instance, gave the Democratic candidate over one hundred and five thousand votes, Frémont got ninety-six thousand, Fillmore over thirty-seven thousand, and Bissell actually carried the State, as Lincoln had predicted he would, by a majority of five thousand. If all Illinois Whigs and Americans who voted for Fillmore in 1856 should support the Republican Party in 1860 and like gains be made throughout the North, that section would be solidly Republican and would elect the next President by a majority of Northern votes without a single vote from the South.

Should that take place, a Southern Confederacy would be formed and, if necessary, defended by arms. That outcome was announced hundreds of times during the Frémont campaign, and stated in frank and bold, if not unkind terms. But during that contest Lincoln had often said, as if speaking for the North to the South: 'We don't want to dissolve the Union, and if you attempt it, we won't let you. With the purse and sword, the army, navy and treasury at our command, you could not do it.'[2]

The element that elected Buchanan was the old line Whigs. Tens of thousands of them, like Choate, voted for him in terror of the Republican Party, and as the best way of beating it. Many did this in Illinois. In the country as a whole, almost nine hundred thousand Whigs and 'Americans' voted for Fill-

[1] Kentucky, 314, Maryland, 281, Virginia, 291, McKee, 103. This fact was made much of by all anti-Republican newspapers. For example, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* said: 'All can now see how unfortunate it would have been if the "sectional" party had triumphed and had sought to administer the government upon its basis.' Clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, Jan. 12, 1857.

[2] Page 378, *supra*.

more. Nearly three hundred thousand of these votes were cast in Northern States.

But Fillmore's heaviest vote, most evenly distributed, was in the South — nearly twenty-one thousand in Louisiana, twenty-four thousand in Mississippi, twenty-eight thousand in Alabama, thirty-six thousand in North Carolina, forty-two thousand in Georgia, forty-eight thousand in Missouri, sixty thousand in Virginia, sixty-six thousand in Tennessee, sixty-seven thousand in Kentucky; and he actually carried Maryland. South Carolina cast her eight votes, chosen by the Legislature, for Buchanan.

These Fillmore votes, North and South, were cast, chiefly as a protest against a sectional party, against radicalism, against the possibility of war. If that vote should fall off during the coming four years, if anything should happen that would divide it between the Democratic and the Republican parties, or would add greatly to Republican strength from any quarter or for any cause, the lines were drawn, the die was cast, and an attempt at disunion as certain as sunset.

Such decisive events did come to pass, and we shall now see how Lincoln met them.

CHAPTER VII

THE DRED SCOTT DECISION

Let us re-inaugurate the good old 'central ideas' of the republic, . . . not that 'all States as States are equal,' nor yet that 'all citizens as citizens are equal,' but to renew the broader, better declaration, including both these and much more, that 'all men are created equal!' LINCOLN, Dec. 10, 1856.

At the time of the Declaration of Independence . . . and for more than a century before, they [negroes] had been regarded as so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect. Chief Justice TANEY, March 6, 1857.

DEMOCRATIC and Republican leaders gave opposite interpretation of the election of Buchanan.

The opinion of the victors was best stated by President Pierce in his message to Congress, December 2, 1856. The meaning of the election, said the President, was that the country had repudiated the 'sectional party' whose course led to civil war, 'burning cities, and ravaged fields, and slaughtered populations.' See how the leaders of that party were teaching disrespect for the Constitution, defiance of the laws, contempt for the Courts; educating the people 'to stand face to face as enemies, rather than shoulder to shoulder as friends;' and thus undermining the Union itself. Those leaders pretended only to oppose the extension of slavery into the Territories, but their real purpose was to destroy it in the States as well. Many who 'inconsiderately' had joined the sectional party loved the Nation and shrank from the thought of war; but that was the end of the road upon which they had been misled by unscrupulous men.

How absurd to say that slavery would go everywhere unless barred by national law! Did that system, then, have so much more natural vigor than free labor? There never would have been trouble in Kansas but for 'propagandist colonization' and outside interference. Nebraska was proof of that. But all was now peace in Kansas. The attempt to set up a 'revolutionary government' there, urged and financed by outsiders, had utterly failed. Exaggerated reports of turmoil and bloodshed in that

Territory had been made — the whole of it had been hardly more than had taken place in 'single cities' in the States.

So, said the President, the people, disgusted with sectional contention, recoiling from the prospect of civil war, determined to maintain the Constitution and uphold the American system as established by the Fathers, had declared for the equality of States as States, of citizens as citizens regardless of religion or birthplace, and for the inviolability of the rights of the sections.

Bold, direct, aggressive as these charges and statements of the President were, they were surpassed by his positive and repeated assertion that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. In view of the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case which was to come three months later, this pronouncement of the President on December 2, 1856, was, by far, the most important in his notable message.

Pierce was leaving public life forever; there was not even the possibility of a hope that he could be President again; at the Cincinnati Convention the South had left him for Douglas; he was going back to his New Hampshire home and that State had become almost as fierce as Massachusetts against slavery and the South. If any man ever was free from political influence, Franklin Pierce was unbound and untrammelled when he wrote his last annual message to Congress.[1]

In this situation, the President affirmed with boldness and vigor that the Missouri Compromise had violated the Constitution. In a review of what he called 'indirect aggression' upon the South from the North — agitation for emancipation, aid to runaway slaves, State laws to thwart the national statute, interference with normal migration to the Territories — the President took up the vexed question of the Missouri Compromise.

It had been 'acquiesced in rather than approved by the States,' he said; the North had broken it time and again; when it was repealed it had no 'binding virtue' whatever; it never was more than a Congressional enactment by the familiar pro-

[1] After Pierce's term expired, Davis wrote his former chief the politician's usual polite letter about the many friends who were still for him for President again; but the former President answered that he did not want the office and could not get it if he did want it. *Am. Hist. Rev.*, x, 360–1.

cess of legislative compromise. Four times, in a long and detailed analysis, the President, emphatically and aggressively, asserted that the Missouri Compromise had been null and void from the first. In the light of what follows, it cannot be repeated too often, that these direct statements of the President were the weightiest part of his remarkable message.[1]

Such was the Democratic view of the situation after the election of 1856: the people had not only rebuked the sectional movement and declared against the war in which that movement if successful would result, but they had approved the conduct of the Administration, including the repeal of the 'unconstitutional' Missouri Compromise.

What, now, was the Republican view of the meaning of the election and of the political state of things? Leaders of the new party everywhere expressed that view; but none of them made it so simple and clear as did Lincoln. Throughout the North, Republican banquets were held during the winter of 1856–57. These gatherings were 'love-feasts' of rejoicing over State and local election victories. On December 10, 1856, one of them was given at the Tremont House in Chicago. Three hundred guests were there, practically all from Northern Illinois, most of them from Chicago itself. However, 'it was an assemblage of heroes, fresh from the field of fight and fame, with the laurels of victory on their brow,' reported an enthusiastic Republican paper.[2]

Everything good to eat and drink which then could be found in Chicago — 'every luxury,' said the newspapers — was on the tables. The editor of the *Illinois State Journal*, who was there, declared that 'the vocabulary of superlatives' could not do justice to the occasion, and that his readers would have to draw upon their imagination to fill this picture. The banquet began at eight o'clock and lasted 'until after the watch-dial pointed to the beginning of another day.' At the ends of the hall, long and broad American flags were draped; upon one was put the motto 'LIBERTY AND UNION,' upon the other 'ILLINOIS REDEEMED.' A glee club sang lively songs and at intervals a band played in a way that was positively 'soul-stirring.'

Letters from Seward, Chase, Trumbull, and other party

[1] *Messages:* Richardson, v, 397–407. [2] *Chicago Democratic Press*, Dec. 11, 1856.

chieftains were 'received with loud bursts of applause.' Responses were made to thirteen regular toasts, among them a toast to Frémont, to Bissell, to the Republican Party, to a Free Press, to States' Rights, to Our Adopted Citizens, to Illinois, to 'Kansas — the power behind the throne, is greater than the throne itself. Kansas will be free.'

The last toast on the printed program was: '1860! — THERE'S A GOOD TIME COMING BOYS!'

After these and other formal toasts had been drunk and responses made, many other sentiments were volunteered amid the approving shouts of the happy diners, who grew ever more genial and expressive as the gay hours wore on.

The first toast on the formal list was: 'THE UNION — *The North* will maintain it — the South will not depart therefrom;' and to this sentiment Lincoln spoke. His speech was incomparably the best made on that jubilant night. 'There is no man upon whom they [the Republicans of Illinois] would so gladly confer the highest honors within their gift,' wrote the editor of the party organ at Springfield, 'and I trust an opportunity may not long be wanting which will enable them to place him in a station that seems to be by universal consent conceded to him and which he is so admirably qualified by nature to adorn.' [1]

Lincoln rose to respond 'amid almost deafening cheers.' The Republican Party was for the Union, he began, and again cheers broke out. If it had been 'entirely successful, it would have been the friend of the Union more than ever. [Loud and long continued cheers.] . . . As Webster said "Not Union without liberty, nor liberty without Union; but Union and liberty, now and forever, one and inseparable." [Loud cheers.]'

When Lincoln spoke of Bissell, Governor-elect, there was a demonstration — 'Loud and long continued cheers and waving of handkerchiefs.' The speaker told two stories which brought shouts of laughter from the cheerful and cheery banqueters, although they are not very amusing in print.[2]

[1] *Illinois State Journal*, Dec. 13, 1856.

[2] These stories were illustrative of the Democratic predicament with reference to the Governor-elect and his determined character. The Democrats were saying that Bissell could not take the oath of office. They would learn better, said Lincoln. The Democrats reminded him of a 'darkey' who had gone into a hollow tree, leaving another

Then Lincoln launched into an attack on the President's message. Pierce was 'like a rejected lover making merry at the wedding of his rival,' said Lincoln. The people elect Buchanan! Pierce forgot that only a minority voted for the Democratic candidate — a minority of about four hundred thousand. Frémont men had not been duped as the President charged; it was Pierce, who wanted a second term, who had been duped. 'He is the cat's-paw.' So long had Pierce dragged others' chestnuts out of the fire that 'his claws are burnt off to the gristle, and he is thrown aside as unfit for further use. As the fool said of King Lear, when his daughters had turned him out of doors, "He's a shelled peascod."' [1]

It was false, Lincoln asserted, that the Republican Party wanted to abolish slavery in the South or to weaken the Constitution and laws, as Pierce had said. 'I pronounce the charge an unmixed and unmitigated falsehood!' Ours is a Government by public opinion and can be changed only as that controlling influence is changed. Public opinion always formed about 'a central idea.' Until recently that dominant thought had been 'the equality of men;' and although, 'as a matter of actual necessity,' the public mind had yielded to existing inequalities, public opinion had made steady advance toward 'the practical equality of all men.'

In the late campaign, Lincoln continued, one party had striven to overthrow that central idea and establish the opposite idea that 'slavery is right in the abstract.' Not only might that idea result in the perpetuation of human bondage but in 'its extension to all countries and colors.' The phrase, State equal-

'darkey' outside. A bear put its head in the hole and the negro outside caught hold of its tail. 'What was darkening de hole?' asked the negro in the tree. 'Ah!' cried the other darkey, . . . "if de tail breaks you'll find out." [Laughter and cheers.]'

Lincoln explained: 'These darkies at Springfield see something darkening the hole, but wait till the tail breaks on the first of January [when Bissell would be inaugurated], and they will see. [Cheers.]'

Lincoln's other story was about a boy 'who was talking to another as to whether General Jackson could ever get to Heaven. Said the boy, "He'd get there if he had a mind to." [Cheers and laughter.]' So it was with Colonel Bissell, said Lincoln; 'he'd do whatever he had a mind to. [Cheers.]' *Chicago Daily Democratic Press*, Dec. 11, 1856. The descriptions of this banquet are from that paper and from the *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Dec. 13, 1856.

[1] 'That's a shealed peascod.' King Lear, I, 4, 219.

ity, which the President had extolled so highly, was a mere 'catch-phrase,' invented by the *Richmond Enquirer*, 'an avowed advocate of slavery, regardless of color.' Although Pierce thought that the 'new central idea' had prevailed, the majority of the people had not yet endorsed it and, Lincoln added, we 'hope they never will.'

But at the polls 'we were divided between Frémont and Fillmore,' Lincoln said; and that assertion was the heart of his speech as it was of all Republican explanations of Buchanan's success. Lincoln and other Republican leaders assumed that the million men who had voted for the Whig and Know-Nothing candidate in 1856 were opposed to slavery or to the extension of it. This, of course, was far from true, since few if any of the hundreds of thousands of Fillmore supporters in the South were against slavery, and since many in the North, like Stuart and other old line Whigs of Central Illinois, were irreconcilably opposed to the Republican Party. But it was sound political strategy to declare that all those who voted for Fillmore or for Frémont, stood for the same thing; and Lincoln said so, not bothering his hearers or himself about the niceties of exact fact.

So, he continued, 'can we not come together for the future?' Let bygones be bygones, and 'let every one who really believes, and is resolved, that free society is not and shall not be a failure, and who can conscientiously declare that in the past contest he has done only what he thought best — let every such one have charity to believe that every other one can say as much.' Thus Lincoln appealed to his fellow partisans of former days, who had refused to go with him into the new party, who, as we have seen, felt bitterly toward him, and still held out against him.

With lofty yet touching eloquence Lincoln closed: 'Let past differences as nothing be; and with steady eye on the real issue, let us reinaugurate the good old "central ideas" of the republic. We can do it. The human heart is with us; God is with us. We shall again be able not to declare that "all States as States are equal," nor yet that "all citizens as citizens are equal," but to renew the broader, better declaration, including both these and much more, that "all men are created equal."' [1]

[1] *Works*, II, 308–12.

Cheers rang out and rang again and again when Lincoln thus finished his speech.[1] Others spoke to the toasts assigned to them, and dull was the sentence that did not draw applause from that eager audience. So with much oratory, much shouting, much singing by the glee club and music by the band until midnight, the Republican banquet of jollification and hope came to an end.

Just as the most striking part of Pierce's message was his repeated assertion that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional, so the most significant thing about Lincoln's speech was his omission to make any reference whatever to that subject. Although he was replying to the President, attacking the Democratic position, and announcing the Republican program, Lincoln said nothing about the aggressively asserted unconstitutionality of the 'sacred compact,' the repeal of which he had so sternly assailed and the judicial announcement of which he, in common with all Republican leaders and the whole press of the party, was thereafter to make so great an issue.

The President's attack and Lincoln's silence are equally startling. It would seem that Lincoln did not think the matter important; or else that he did not think of it at all; but that he considered that pleas for Union and equality in the abstract were the best that the Republicans could do just then.

But hilarity and rejoicing over past election triumphs did not mean that the Republicans would win next time. Nor were generalizations about Union and equality concrete issues upon which a campaign could be made. Something tangible was needed. As to the Union, the Democrats declared for it as loudly as the Republicans. Indeed, their principal charge against the new party was that the Republicans were the real disunionists; and pleas for the equality of all men, negroes and whites alike, would lose more votes than such appeals gained — a fact which Lincoln was to face in his fight with Douglas for the Senate, eighteen months later.

In spite of its recent triumphs at the polls throughout the North, the new party was now in a bad way. Republican speakers and press had nothing to talk about. Kansas had

[1] *Chicago Democratic Press*, Dec. 11, 1856.

ceased to bleed, and most people were tired of that gory subject; no party issue could be made out of our foreign affairs, which were vexed and threatening; the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had been worn threadbare, and nobody proposed to restore that old adjustment — Lincoln least of all; the new party was not united even for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, and Lincoln stood firmly for that statute — we shall presently hear him making strong protest against so much as the mention of it in party conventions or platforms; the financial and industrial crash so soon to overwhelm the nation was not yet sensed, and, in spite of increasing hard times, even bankers and business men appear not to have realized the impending economic disaster.

In the North only the Abolitionists had a real issue — the destruction of slavery everywhere and at once. But from no proposal did Republican leaders flee in greater alarm than from that.

Worse still, early in the new year, an event took place which embarrassed the Republicans. They had been thunderously denouncing the fire-eaters of the South for preaching disunion — 'we won't go out and you shan't,' Lincoln had said — and now Northern fire-eaters were demanding the same thing in terms as fierce as Southern extremists ever had uttered. These disunionists of the North were the Abolitionists, allies of the Republican Party. Indeed, the Democrats and the whole South charged and believed that Abolitionists and Republicans were affiliated, if not identical,[1] and it is certain that most Abolitionists and the vast number whom they influenced had voted for Frémont.

On January 15, 1857, the disunionists of Massachusetts met at Worcester. Disunion speeches were made, disunion resolutions adopted. 'The sooner the separation takes place, the more peaceful it will be: but that peace or war is a *secondary consideration*,' ran one resolution. 'NO UNION WITH SLAVEHOLDERS,' cried Garrison at the end of a long, able, and pas-

[1] *Washington Union*, May 14, 1857. 'Their principles and objects are the same.' Garrison, however, could not endorse Frémont, because Frémont believed in 'the Union as it is,' and he advised those who agreed with him not to vote for him.

sionate speech.[1] Wendell Phillips said that the Union was 'accursed of God' — away with it — 'the whole South is one great magazine of cowards.' The Reverend Samuel J. May, Jr., wanted New England to secede by itself if the rest of the North would not — let Massachusetts go out alone if need be.[2]

'Talk of treason!' exclaimed Rev. Thomas Wentworth Higginson: 'Why, I have been trying for ten years to get the opportunity to commit treason' — disunion was 'destiny,' he shouted. Frank W. Bird of Walpole, Mass., announced that 'the decision of the Supreme Court, in the Scott case is soon to be given, affirming the extreme Southern doctrine, that slavery goes everywhere under the Federal flag' — let the North withdraw.[3] At night Phillips spoke again. There was no reason for the Union, he said; we are 'essentially two nations. . . . Treason! . . . Treason runs in the blood that flowed out on Bunker Hill.'[4] The hall rocked with approving cheers.

Theodore Parker could not attend the Convention, but wrote that it was a good thing — it would teach manners to the South, that 'shrew' to whom the North was wedded, 'thriftless, idle, drunken, dirty, lewd, shrill-voiced, . . . feeble bodied, and ugly to look upon.' But Parker was not for breaking up the Union — at least not 'just now,' because 'the North is seventeen millions strong; and the South contains eleven millions, whereof four millions are slaves, and four millions "poor whites."' Parker once thought the slavery question could be settled without bloodshed, he wrote; but he now realized that it would require war.[5]

In such fashion raged the secessionists of the North. For nearly twenty years the disunion sentiment had been growing throughout that section; and after the election of Buchanan disunion meetings and conventions had been held in many towns in the free States.[6] At anti-slavery conventions at

[1] *Liberator*, Jan. 23, 1857. [2] *Ib.*, Jan. 30, 1857.
[3] *Ib.*, Feb. 6, 1857. [4] *Ib.*, Feb. 20, 1857.

[5] Parker to Higginson, Jan. 18, 1857, *ib.*, Jan. 23, 1857. Also *Life and Correspondence of Theodore Parker:* John Weiss, II, 192–4.

[6] Henry C. Wright to Garrison, Toledo, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1856, *Liberator*, Jan. 16, 1857. Wright makes mention of such 'conventions' at Angola, Ind., and Adrian, Mich., and speaks of other 'Conventions which I have attended the past five years.' All anti-slavery assemblages declared for secession by the North.

Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Albany during February, 1857, violent secession speeches were made.[1] Disunion 'tracts' were circulated widely.[2] At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in Boston, January 29–30, 1857, Parker Pillsbury not only denounced 'this guilty Union,' but 'spoke with much power of the right of the slaves to rise in insurrection against their tyrants and enslavers.'[3]

Republican leaders were asked to attend the Worcester meeting. Senator Wilson flatly denounced the project; Giddings was sympathetic, but thought that 'we should remain in the Union' and trust to the Republican Party to extend liberty;[4] Seward wrote a letter of dissent, but did not send it.[5] Most Republicans who received invitations ignored them.

Here was a predicament for the Republican managers. They could not offend the overwhelming Union sentiment of their party and of the North by even countenancing the Northern disunionists; nor could they harshly rebuke the Abolitionists, since they were now 'recruiting officers for the Republicans' and 'their active hostility was yearly becoming more dangerous.'[6] So, for the most part, Republican speakers and newspapers said nothing about the inflammatory conventions at Worcester and other places. Lincoln, too, was silent; he attacked only the disunionists of the South; they alone were dangerous; Northern secessionists would be strong Union men when the fatal day should dawn, since it would then be the South and not they who seceded; by no possibility could they induce any free State to withdraw from the Union. So let them talk all they liked.

Even Greeley's sharp and burning pen was dull and cold. The *Tribune* merely reported the proceedings of the Worcester convention, praising the speakers — 'master archers' — but remarking that '"eloquence was dog cheap" at the Revolu-

For brief but dramatic account of the Massachusetts Disunion Convention see Channing, VI, 180–5. Professor Channing is the first scholar to give an account of the disunion movement in the North.

[1] *Liberator*, March 6, 1857. [2] *Washington Union*, March 20, 1857.

[3] *Liberator*, Feb. 6, 1857.

[4] Wilson to Higginson, Jan. 10; Giddings to same, Jan. 7, 1857, *Liberator*, Jan. 23, 1857.

[5] *Life of William Henry Seward:* Frederic Bancroft, I, 435–6. [6] *Ib.*, 436.

tionary Convention. . . . Common sense was uncommonly uncommon. Time alone can determine whether common or *uncommon* sense is the truest wisdom.' [1] But Greeley was in a tighter place than most Republican editors. Less than eight months before, the *Tribune* had published, seemingly with approval, the statement of its Washington correspondent, James S. Pike, the most radical and pugnacious journalist in the capital, if not in the country: 'Personally, I have no doubt that the Free and Slave States ought to separate.' [2] Such expressions of opinion were given now and then by country Republican editors. 'This twaddle about the "Union" and its preservation, is too silly and sickening for any good effect. *We think the liberty of a single slave is worth more than* ALL THE UNIONS GOD'S UNIVERSE CAN HOLD!' [3]

In general, such views seldom appeared in the Republican press and never were uttered by Republican speakers. When the call for the Worcester gathering was sent out, the ably edited *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican* merely remarked that the project was 'simply boyish and contemptible' — let the promoters of secession go South for signers; [4] and this was the common feeling among Republicans.

Still the incident was vexatious, and made the leaders and newspapers of the new party keener than ever for something practical to talk about, something of which an issue could be made, something that would even silently influence voters, something that would split and weaken the united and strong Democratic Party. All these things speedily came, came successively and, as if timed by Fate, came with cumulative force. Seldom if ever has a political party been so favored by fortune as were the Republicans during 1857. The first piece of good luck they had was the Dred Scott decision; the second, a book of fury and fact called *The Impending Crisis* by a young native

[1] Worcester Correspondence, 'J. R.,' New York *Tribune*, Jan. 17, in issue Jan. 19, 1857; 2nd dispatch, Jan. 14 in issue of Jan. 21, 1857.

[2] Washington Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, June 3, in issue June 5, 1856.

[3] *True American* (Rep.), Erie Co., Pa., as quoted in *Illinois State Register*, Aug. 12, 1856. Italics and capitals *Register's*.

[4] Jan. 6, 1857, editorial. The *Republican's* report of the Convention, although full and accurate, was contemptuous.

of North Carolina; the third, the Mormon resistance to the National Government; the fourth, a ruinous financial panic; the fifth, Douglas's defiance of the Administration and the split of the Democratic Party over a Constitution for Kansas.

Just at the time when Lincoln, as the candidate of both Democrats and Whigs for the Legislature in 1834, was going from cabin to cabin among the woods along the water courses and in the groves of Sangamon County in search of votes, a young surgeon of the United States Army, Dr. John Emerson, was making his way from St. Louis to the frontier military station at Rock Island, Illinois, to which he had been transferred. With Dr. Emerson went a body servant, a young negro of perhaps thirty years, whom he had bought of Peter Blow, an important business man of St. Louis.

The name of the slave was Dred Scott. He had been born on the Blow plantation in Virginia sometime during the presidency of Jefferson.

After two years at Rock Island, Dr. Emerson was ordered to Fort Snelling, an outpost in that part of the Territory of Wisconsin which is now the State of Minnesota; and the surgeon took his servant with him. At this station lived the Agent for Indian Affairs with the Northwestern tribes, Major Laurence Taliaferro.[1] This official owned a negro girl, Harriet. Emerson bought her, probably for a maid to his wife. The surgeon stayed at Fort Snelling until October, 1837. In due time Dred married Harriet with the consent of their owner. Not long afterward Dr. Emerson was transferred back to St. Louis, and Dred and his wife went with him.

On the Mississippi River steamboat, *Gypsy*, before it reached the Missouri line, Harriet gave birth to a girl; and, after a year in St. Louis, another girl was born. In 1842 Dr. Emerson left the Army,[2] because of ill-health. The Dred Scott family continued as his slaves. Two years later Dr. Emerson died, and the negroes became the property of his wife, who was made administratrix of her husband's estate.

[1] Taliaferro's testimony before retiring board, Aug., 1863. MSS. War Department, Washington, D.C.

[2] Records War Dept.

In the fall of 1846, eight years after his return to Missouri, Dred Scott brought suit for his liberty against Mrs. Emerson in the State Court at St. Louis. The ground of the suit was that by living in Illinois he had been made free under the Constitution of that State, and that his sojourn in the Territory of Wisconsin had also made him free, because the Missouri Compromise of 1820 prohibited slavery in the domain acquired from France north of the line of 36° and 30′, except the State of Missouri. In the trial court Dred won; but Mrs. Emerson appealed to the State Supreme Court which reversed the judgment on the ground that, having returned to Missouri voluntarily, the negro resumed his status of slavery under the laws of that State. In so deciding, the majority of the Missouri Supreme Court frankly overruled previous decisions in like cases, and the Chief Justice, Hamilton R. Gamble, dissented in a stern opinion.[1]

This decision was made at the March term of the Supreme Court of Missouri, 1852.

At this point, politics comes upon the stage. In 1850, while the appeal was pending in the State Supreme Court, Mrs. Emerson married Dr. Calvin Clifford Chaffee, of Springfield, Massachusetts. Chaffee, then thirty-nine years old, was elected a Representative in the Thirty-fourth Congress and continued a Representative throughout the Dred Scott litigation. He was a Know-Nothing and an Abolitionist.

[1] Scott (a man of color) *vs.* Emerson, Mo. Sup. Ct. Rept., xv, 577–92.

The spirit of the majority opinion is shown by such passages as: 'Times now are not as they were when the former decisions on this subject were made. Since then, not only individuals but States have been possessed with a dark and vile spirit in relation to slavery . . . whose inevitable consequence must be the overthrow and destruction of our government. Under such circumstances, it does not behoove the State of Missouri to show the least countenance to any measure which might gratify that spirit. . . .

'On almost three sides, the State of Missouri is surrounded by free soil. . . . Considering the numberless instances in which those living along an extreme frontier would have occasion to occupy their slaves beyond our boundary, how hard would it be if our courts should liberate all the slaves who should be thus employed. How unreasonable to ask it! If a master sends his slave to hunt his horses or cattle beyond the boundary, shall he thereby be liberated? But our courts, it is said, will not go so far. If not go the entire length, why go at all? . . .

'There is no comparison between the slave in the United States and the cruel uncivilized negro in Africa. When the condition of our slaves is contrasted with the state of their miserable race in Africa . . . we are almost persuaded, that the introduction of slavery amongst us was, in the providence of God . . . a means of placing that unhappy race within the pale of civilized nations.'

Mrs. Chaffee and her husband could have disposed of their interest in the slaves at any time, and they did so very soon after the Supreme Court of the United States decided the Dred Scott case. For the time being, however, the negro family was, ostensibly, kept in bondage, and was so continued until that historic litigation came to an end.

The former Mrs. Emerson, now Mrs. Chaffee, had a brother, John F. A. Sanford, who lived in New York; and a 'fictitious sale' of the Scott negroes was made to him.[1] This was done so that a suit could be brought by Dred in the United States District Court at St. Louis against Sanford in New York, on the ground that the plaintiff and the defendant lived in different States. Otherwise the United States Court would not have jurisdiction to hear and decide it. To have brought the suit against Mrs. Chaffee would have exposed the fact that the wife of an abolitionist member of Congress from Massachusetts was the owner of slaves. Worse still, it also would have shown what kind of a case it was. So, on November 2, 1853, an attorney of St. Louis, Roswell M. Field, brought suit for Dred Scott against Sanford in the Federal Court at St. Louis, praying that he and his family be given their freedom.

For the fictitious defendant, Sanford, appeared an anti-slavery lawyer of the name of Hugh A. Garland. Sanford went to St. Louis and on the day Field filed Dred's suit against him accepted service of the summons. Sanford filed a plea in abatement to the jurisdiction of the court, denying that Dred Scott was a citizen of Missouri 'because he is a negro of African descent; his ancestors were of pure African blood, and were brought into this country and sold as negro slaves,' and therefore, that the Court did not have jurisdiction. To this plea, Field, for Dred Scott, promptly filed a demurrer[2] — that is,

[1] *The Supreme Court in United States History:* Charles Warren, II, 281. Mr. Warren's account of the Dred Scott case is full, detailed, accurate, and distinguished for impartiality, fairness, and courage. Unless specifically indicated in footnote references, the narrative in the text follows that of Mr. Warren.

For a brilliant and reliable account of the Dred Scott case, see Channing, VI, 186–97. Practically all treatments of this subject that appeared before those of Professor Channing, Mr. Warren, and one by Bernard Steiner, hereafter to be noted, are so erroneous as to facts and so deeply prejudiced, that they are historically of little value.

[2] April 14, 1854.

that the facts stated by Sanford did not show that Dred was not a citizen, and therefore, that the Court did have jurisdiction.

On this demurrer, Robert W. Wells, the United States District Judge, decided for Scott. Immediately, the attorneys arranged with the Court 'that an agreed case should be made up by them.' This was done, pleas filed, issues joined, and the case tried on an agreed statement of facts, which were those given in this narrative. On this statement Judge Wells refused to instruct the jury that the law was with Dred Scott as formally requested by his attorney, Field; and, instead, instructed the jury that the law was with Sanford, as formally requested by his attorney, Garland. Since this instruction was the reverse of the Court's ruling for Scott on the demurrer, it is obvious that from the first the whole case was arranged for appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States, where it was promptly taken on a writ of error. Here another thread becomes a part of this web of mystery — Dred Scott's appeal bond was signed by Henry Taylor Blow,[1] a son of Peter Blow, from whom Dred Scott had been bought by Dr. Emerson.

On May 25, 1854, nearly six months after Field brought the suit and just when the storm over the Kansas-Nebraska Act was raging furiously, he wrote to Montgomery Blair in Washington that it would be better for the country to have the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise decided one way or the other, even adversely, than to have the question left open.[2] And again, just after the case reached the Supreme Court in December, 1854, Field wrote Blair that if he would 'bring it to a hearing and decision, . . . a much disputed question would be settled by the highest Court of the Nation.[3]

Six months before the case was even entered on the docket of that tribunal,[4] a pamphlet, containing a certified transcript of the whole proceedings in the District Court, was printed at St. Louis, July 1, 1854, and circulated. This pamphlet, entitled *The Case of Dred Scott in the Supreme Court of the United States, December Term*, 1854, contained a preface, dated July 4, 1854,

[1] *Life of Roger Brooke Taney:* Bernard Steiner, 331. [2] *Ib.*
[3] Steiner, 331. [4] Dec. 30, 1854. Records, Clerk Supreme Court.

signed by the mark of Dred Scott. It was an appeal to all who might read it for sympathy and help.

Whoever wrote this preface was an adroit politician and a master of the art of propaganda. It was addressed 'To my Fellow-Men,' and briefly and clearly stated the facts in paragraphs of from one to three sentences only. Then, making Scott talk in the first person, it went on to say, that, at the trial, the Judge, in Scott's presence, read from the Illinois Constitution of 1818 and the Missouri Compromise, and Dred was made to continue his simple and affecting story thus:

'The Judge said that, according to these laws, while I was in Illinois and Wisconsin, I was a free man — just as good as my master — and that I had as much right to make a slave of a white man, as a white man to make a slave of me.

'I was sorry nobody ever told me that while I was there. Yet I was glad to hear the judge talk so, for I thought he would set me free.

'But, after a little while the judge said that as soon as my master got me back this side of the line of Missouri, my right to be free was gone; and that I and my wife and my children became nothing but so many pieces of property.

'I thought it hard that white men should draw a line of their own on the face of the earth, on one side of which a black man was to become no man at all, and never say a word to the black man about it until they had got him on that side of the line. So I appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States.

'My case will be heard at the next term beginning in December.

'I am now in the hands of the sheriff of this county, who hires me out and receives my wages. I am not at liberty to go out of the county. I have no money to pay any body at Washington to speak for me.

'My fellow-men, can any of you help me in my day of trial? Will nobody speak for me at Washington, even without hope of other reward than the blessings of a poor black man and his family? I do not know. I can only pray that some good heart will be moved by pity to do that for me which I can not do for

myself; and that if the right is on my side, it may be so declared by the high court to which I have appealed.'

It would appear to be certain, that payment for the printing and distribution of this circular was made by the same person or interest that bore the expense of the whole litigation; but who that person or interest was, is not positively known. It is clear only that the outlay was made in the anti-slavery cause.

So when the Supreme Court of the United States convened in December, 1854, it found on the docket the case of Scott *vs.* Sanford. It took its regular course, and was not reached for argument until February 11, 1856. At the request of Field, Montgomery Blair appeared for Dred Scott. Because of the public controversy over the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, Blair afterward declared that he tried to get 'one of the ablest men at the Bar in the South' to help him, and nearly succeeded; but that the eminent Southern lawyer finally declined though not 'from the selfish motive given in the press.' Then Blair sought the help of Northern lawyers, he said; but they too, refused, some because of previous engagements and others because Blair's request came too late for them to prepare arguments.[1]

Henry S. Geyer, then Senator from Missouri, an eminent lawyer in that State, and Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, of fine abilities, an old line Whig of the stern and rock-bound type and an intense believer in slavery, appeared for Sanford. Both men came into the case voluntarily, Johnson, as he tells us, mainly because of his long-held convictions that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional.

Immediately after the argument, the New York *Tribune* printed dispatches from its Washington correspondent, that the case would probably be decided against Scott on 'the pretext' that his voluntary return to Missouri restored his status of slavery; that the Supreme Court might 'evade' the real issue and thus possibly prevent the delivery of dissenting opinions on the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise, but that 'an effort will be made to get a positive decree of some sort, and,

[1] Blair's statement in *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1856, as quoted in Warren, II, 282.

in that event, there is some hope of aid from the Southern members of the Court.' [1]

During April, 1856, the Court held two consultations on the Dred Scott case. The *Tribune's* correspondent was puzzled as to how the Court stood, but said that 'there was hope that the decree might be made upon the merits.' Washington representatives of other papers were no less perplexed; but it was positively asserted that if the majority should decide against Scott on any ground, Justice McLean of Ohio would 'confound' them in a dissenting opinion and Justice Curtis of Massachusetts would give a 'powerful exposition of the case and of all the incidental questions connected with it.' [2] Such was the judgment of newspaper men on the ground during April, 1856, a vital fact and a vital date in view of what followed.

But Justice Curtis wrote to George Ticknor of Boston, who was then in Italy, that the Court had determined that it would 'not decide the question of the Missouri Compromise line — a majority of the judges being of opinion that it is not necessary to do so. (This is confidential.)' [3]

At this time the Court stood four to four on the question of jurisdiction, with Justice Nelson of New York undecided on that point. So grave was his doubt, that he asked his associates to order a reargument and this was done May 12, 1856, the reargument to be heard at the beginning of the next session of the Court in December. General opinion was that, in view of the tempestuous Presidential campaign then at hand, 'the Court had acted wisely in not giving a decision on this delicate question prior to the election.' But Greeley, bitterly disappointed, assailed the Justices with his usual intemperance of language — 'the black gowns have come to be artful dodgers.' [4]

John McLean of Ohio was the one Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States who has ever taken an active part

[1] Quoted in Warren, II, 283. These surmises of the correspondent as to the Court's probable action were surprisingly in accord with the facts. *Ib.*

[2] *Ib.*, 283–4.

[3] Justice B. R. Curtis to George Ticknor, April 8, 1856. *Memoir of Benjamin Robbins Curtis*, edited by his son, B. R. Curtis, I, 179–80.

[4] Warren, II, 285.

in politics while on the bench.[1] Even before his appointment as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court by Jackson in 1829, McLean had been either an active or 'receptive' candidate for the Presidency; votes had been cast for him in the Whig Convention in 1848; and at critical times he had written for publication his views on burning questions, some of which might come before the Supreme Court for decision. For this unjudicial conduct Justice McLean had been criticized with utmost severity, both in Congress and in the press.[2]

And now again, when the Republican Convention of 1856 was approaching, and when the validity of the Missouri Compromise was before the Court in the Dred Scott case, or at least when newspaper men in Washington knew that Justice McLean was ready with a dissenting opinion asserting the power of Congress to exclude slavery from the Territories, he once more made public, and in vigorous language, his views on that subject.[3]

It was because of this statement of Justice McLean and of the eagerness and expectation of the Republican press and leaders that the Supreme Court would pass upon the Missouri Compromise in its decision of the Dred Scott case, that Lincoln

[1] Warren, II, 269–71. [2] *Ib.*, 270–1.

[3] In a long and thoroughly political letter — the letter of a candidate — written from Cincinnati eleven days before the Philadelphia Convention, June 17, 1856, McLean tells a political supporter that the Dred Scott case has been continued until the December term; while he could say nothing about it, he was glad that his friend liked 'my views already publicly avowed as to the constitutional power of the general government over the subject of slavery in the territories.' McLean to Alexander C. M. Pennington, June 6, 1856. McLean MSS.

McLean was criticized in the House by James A. Stewart of Maryland: 'In exciting times like these, when all earthly tribunals, in order to command respect, must be firm, unswerving, and above raving, popular clamor; when, too, the merits of the question were much involved in a case to come before him as one of the Judges of the last resort — to have made a parade of his opinion, thus intermingling with the partisan debates of a passing hour — cannot certainly commend himself to the approval of an intelligent public.' *Cong. Globe,* 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 985.

Justice McLean received many flattering letters, some of them predicting that he would be nominated instead of Frémont. J. Watson Webb (editor *New York Courier,* a radical Republican paper) to McLean, June 2, 1856; E. B. Washburne (writing from Hall of House of Representatives) to McLean, June 10, 1856, asking for data as to McLean's life to use in case he is nominated at Philadelphia. McLean MSS.

In fact these letters began in 1855. When Frémont was chosen as the Republican candidate it was reported that McLean would vote for Fillmore because the Republican party was sectional. Many letters of inquiry were written him, but the old Justice would neither affirm nor deny the truth of the report.

had said in the Frémont campaign that that tribunal was the one to settle such questions, that when it did so, the Republicans would abide by what the Court held to be the law and Lincoln had challenged the Democrats to do the same. If they would not, 'who are the disunionists, you or we?'

Such was the situation when the Supreme Court convened in December, 1856, and the day set for the second argument of Scott *vs.* Sanford, the 15th of that month, arrived. On that date, Stephens, who had made sharp reference to the Dred Scott case in his speech on Kansas in the House on June 28, 1856, and who was now as fearful as Greeley formerly had been that the court would ignore the question of the Missouri Compromise, wrote to his brother:

'I have been urging all the influences I could bring to bear upon the Supreme Court to get them to postpone no longer the case on the Missouri Restriction before them, but to decide it. They take it up to-day. If they decide, as I have reason to believe they will, that the restriction was unconstitutional, that Congress had no power to pass it, then the question — the political question — as I think, will be ended as to the power of the people in their Territorial Legislatures. It will be, in effect, a *res adjudicata*.' [1]

On the other hand, radical Republican papers like the *New York Courier* and the New York *Tribune* had now become alarmed lest the Court would pass upon the Missouri Compromise, and they deplored such a decision by 'political judges' — it would seriously impair the reputation of the Court, they feared.[2]

Again Senator Geyer and Reverdy Johnson appeared for Sanford, and again Montgomery Blair made an argument for Dred Scott; but this time he had induced one of the foremost lawyers in the country to assist him. George Ticknor Curtis of Massachusetts, the brother of Justice Curtis of the Supreme Court,

[1] Stephens to Linton Stephens, Dec. 15, 1856. *Life of Alexander H. Stephens:* Johnston and Browne, 316. The idea that a decision against the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise would put an end to the old and acrimonious political controversy about it and give quiet to the country, was the very point that Wayne soon urged upon Taney.

[2] Warren, II, 286–9.

was then in Washington on other business, and only three days before the hearing, he agreed to argue the question of the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise.[1] To that one question, therefore, his great address was confined.

When the argument began, the court room was crowded. Eminent lawyers, Senators, members of the House, and many women listened to that notable contest. Johnson's speech was one of the 'finest efforts made at the Bar,' wrote an unfriendly hearer; and another, who was positively hostile, acknowledged that it 'was brilliant, eloquent and witty;' but, he added, it was more like a stump speech than such an argument ought to be.[2]

The answer of Curtis was an intellectual feat. The Court had nothing to do with the political aspect of the question, he began — whether and in what manner the power of Congress should be exercised — but only with the existence of that power. Curtis's frankness was amazing. If he held in his hand the legislative power of Congress over slavery in the Territories, he would use or withhold that power as circumstances dictated, he declared: 'I would prohibit the relation of master and slave, or permit or sanction it, according to the nature of the soil and climate, the character of the present or the probable character of the future settlers.'

But that was not the question before the Court, he said; the only point to be decided, was 'purely juridical' — did Congress have power over slavery in the Territories? 'As a jurist I believe that Congress has full power to prohibit the introduction of slavery into the Territories of the United States; as a citizen, I can conceive of cases in which it would be unjust to a portion of the Union to exercise that power, and in which I would never exercise it.'

The great Massachusetts lawyer then made an argument which was a historical and logical demonstration of the power of Congress to legislate for the Territories.[3] Toward the end of his address, however, Curtis again went out of his way to say that, while

[1] Curtis's *Memoir*, I, 240–1.

[2] Washington Correspondence, *New York Courier* and New York *Tribune*, as quoted in Warren, II, 288.

[3] The argument for the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise was based on Art. IV, Sect. 3, of the Constitution: 'The Congress shall have power to . . . make all

Congress had that power, as a matter of law, Congress ought not to have tried to dictate what the Constitution of Missouri should contain; and Curtis further asserted that, if circumstance required it, he himself would vote for the admission of a slave State. He closed by saying that he had come into the case 'solely from an impulse of duty,' because Blair had failed 'to obtain assistance in the interest of his case.' [1]

Everybody praised Curtis's speech. 'He was congratulated warmly and by several Southern Senators,' reported the *National Intelligencer*. Justice Catron (of Tennessee) told Curtis's brother, Justice Curtis, that 'it was the best argument on a question of constitutional law he had heard in the court — and he has been here since General Jackson's time;' and, with pride in his brother's triumph, the Justice from Massachusetts wrote to Ticknor, that 'George' had won laurels for himself and the bar of New England.[2]

The spirits of the radicals rose. Perhaps, after all, the Court would not 'dodge' the question, but would decide that the Missouri Compromise was constitutional, as they so much wanted and had once expected the Court to do — perhaps the day had been saved for them by Curtis, stern foe though he was of the whole Republican movement, that 'sectional party,' as he scornfully called it.

In the House defiant warning was sounded that if the Supreme Court should decide that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional, it might thereby 'destroy' itself. A Court composed mostly of Justices from Southern Districts, far inferior in population, wealth, and business to Districts in the North, would not be respected or obeyed by the people of the Free States, exclaimed Benjamin Stanton of Ohio, a Republican leader; certainly there was precedent for ignoring such a deci-

needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and other property belonging to the United States.'

[1] Curtis's argument, preceded by an admirable statement of the case, was printed in pamphlet form in Boston, 1857. This was done on the request of Crittenden of Kentucky, Badger of North Carolina, and other Southern men. 'Some of the ablest minds in the South, at that time, did not regard it as supremely important to their sectional interests to have it judicially proclaimed that the Missouri Compromise restriction was unconstitutional.' Curtis's *Memoir*, I, 241.

[2] Curtis to Ticknor, Feb. 27, 1857. *Ticknor:* Curtis, I, 192–4.

sion, he said. The Supreme Court ought not to pass upon 'great political questions.' Stanton asserted the doctrine of the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions, that when any law is a 'plain, palpable, and deliberate violation of the Constitution,' the States have a right to disregard it and refuse obedience to it. As we shall presently see, this extreme theory of States' Rights had now been adopted, for the time being, as a prime article of the Republican creed.[1]

General opinion during January, 1857, was that the Court would not evade the main question and would hold the Missouri Compromise to be unconstitutional. Let it come now while the North was wrought up, wrote the belligerent Pike to the *Tribune;* that would show that Court, Congress, and President were 'confederates' for the extension of slavery. Yes, by all means, let us have it, 'distinctly, and now.'[2] Stephens wrote to his brother that he had heard, '*sub rosa*,' that this would be the outcome. But whatever the decision might be, said Stephens, it would have a tremendous 'political effect' and would be 'a marked epoch in our history.'[3] Probably Justice Wayne had told his fellow Georgian what he thought the decision would be.

But, at a long consultation on February 15, 1857, the Court determined to ignore the Missouri Compromise entirely, and to decide against Dred Scott on the sole ground that under the laws of Missouri, as expounded by its Supreme Court, Scott's return to that State had restored his status of slavery and therefore that he could bring no suit in the United States Court; and Justice Samuel Nelson of New York was directed to write the Court's opinion to that effect.

At this point an incident changed conditions. A few days after the Court had thus settled what it would do, it was found

[1] *Cong. Globe,* 34th Cong. 3rd Sess., 300–1, Jan. 12, 1857. Stanton's speech was made in support of a resolution, which the House immediately passed, for the reorganization of the Federal Judiciary so as 'to equalize the population and business of the several circuits and districts, and give to all sections of the Confederacy their equal and just representation in the Supreme Court of the United States.'

The disproportion was very great. For instance, the 7th Circuit (Ohio, Ill., Ind., and Mich.) had nine times more people than the 9th Circuit (Miss. and Ark.); the 2nd Circuit (Vt., Conn., and N.Y.) had nearly six times more than the 5th Circuit (Ala. and La.), etc.

[2] Jan. 5, 1857, as quoted in Warren, II, 292.

[3] Stephens to Linton Stephens, Jan. 1, 1857. Johnston and Browne, 318.

that Justices McLean and Curtis had not relinquished their purpose to give extended dissenting opinions in emphatic support of the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise. Here was, indeed, a mare's-nest! If the majority ignored that question and two Justices from the North dealt with it boldly and at length, the country would say that the majority had dodged the real issue and decided on a mere technicality. Yet the Chief Justice, Justice Grier of Pennsylvania, and all the Southern Justices, believed as honestly and firmly that Congress had no right to pass the Missouri Compromise, as McLean and Curtis believed the contrary, and the record did make possible the decision of that question. The Court could contrive to avoid it, but also could legitimately meet it if it must be met.

So the stand of McLean and Curtis 'forced the majority . . . to reconsider the necessity of discussing that point as well, themselves.' [1]

The inauguration of Buchanan was now at hand, and the decision of the Dred Scott case was overdue — it could be delayed no longer. Perhaps the situation was good after all — might not the uproar over slavery in the Territories be stopped and quiet restored to the country by a firm, clear pronouncement from the Supreme Court of the United States, that the Missouri Compromise was null and void? Many conservative men thought that it would.[2]

So, too, thought Justice Wayne of Georgia; and 'with the best intentions, with entirely patriotic motives, and believing thoroughly that such was the law,' testifies George Ticknor Curtis,[3] Justice Wayne moved that the assignment to Justice Nelson to write the opinion of the Court as stated be withdrawn and that the Chief Justice should give the views of the Court 'covering all the points involved,' [4] and this was done. But Wayne had not talked to the other Justices before he made his proposal to the full Court in conference.[5]

[1] Warren, II, 293.

[2] *John Archibald Campbell:* Henry G. Connor (Judge U.S. Court, East. Dist. N.C.), 65–6.

[3] Curtis's *Memoir*, I, 206. [4] Warren, II, 294.

[5] For an account, written fourteen years later, of what was done in conference during the Court's deliberations on the Dred Scott Case, see former Justice Campbell to Samuel Tyler, Nov. 24, 1870, and Justice Nelson to same, May 13, 1871, in *Memoir of Roger Brooke Taney:* Samuel Tyler, 382–5.

Justice Grier of Pennsylvania, however, did not want to pass upon the Missouri Compromise, although he 'had somehow become convinced that it would be useful to the country for him to agree with the Chief Justice, that Congress could not prohibit the existence of slavery in a Territory.' [1] So two weeks before the inauguration, Justice Catron, a close friend of Buchanan, wrote to him to 'drop Grier a line, saying how necessary it is, and how good the opportunity is, to settle the agitation by an affirmative decision of the Supreme Court, the one way or the other.' Relying on their intimate personal relations, Catron also suggested what Buchanan might 'safely say' in his inaugural about the Dred Scott case — the Supreme Court '*must*' decide the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise at some time or other, it was now before that tribunal, the 'high and independent character' of the Court was a guarantee that it would properly 'decide and settle a controversy which has so long and seriously agitated the country.'

Justice Catron also added this vital testimony: '*A majority of my Brethren will be forced up to this point by two dissentients.*' [2]

If there was one thing more than another that the President-elect wanted, it was to get this source of conflict out of the way, to extinguish the whole slavery agitation, to give the country peace and rest.[3] The old man wished to begin and continue his Administration in quiet. He had been out of party politics for a time, and had, in a measure, forgotten the methods of politicians. In short, Buchanan was in the same case, in that regard, as every member of the Supreme Court, except McLean.

Like all of them, too, except McLean, Nelson, and Curtis, the President-elect also believed that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional, and that if the Supreme Court should say so, the entire controversy would be brought to an end. Had not Congress repealed it? Had not President Pierce denounced it as void? Had not the people so declared in electing Bu-

[1] Curtis's *Memoir*, 209.

[2] Catron to Buchanan, Feb. 19, 1857. *Buchanan's Works:* Moore, x, 106 *n.* Italics author's.

[3] Buchanan's election and the Dred Scott decision 'will secure to the country that repose and quiet for which Mr. Buchanan so ardently hopes.' *Washington Daily Union*, March 6, 1857, editorial.

chanan? Now if the highest judicial body in the Nation or in the world should say the same thing, surely the mouth of clamor would be shut.

As requested, Buchanan wrote to his life-long friend, Justice Grier. In view of the accusations so soon to be made and the furious abuse so soon to be rained upon President and Court, it is fortunate that Grier made answer; for this intimate private letter tells just what had taken place in the Court and what would be done. Writing only a few days before the Presidential oath was to be administered, Justice Grier said that the Dred Scott case had not been taken up in conference 'till lately,' because one of the Justices had been ill and absent.[1]

When they did meet at last, there was much discussion, Grier related; but finally the majority agreed that, on the pleadings, the case could be decided by merely affirming the judgment of the District Court, without passing upon the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise or 'the right of a negro to sue in the courts of the United States.' Nelson had been directed to write the opinion accordingly, 'leaving those difficult questions untouched.'

But, confided Justice Grier to the President-elect, McLean and Curtis — especially Justice McLean — were 'determined to come out with a long and labored dissent' on the whole case 'including their opinions and arguments on both the troublesome points, although not necessary to a decision of the case.' The majority of the Court thought that both questions were '*in* the case and may be legitimately considered,' but had hoped to avoid them.

In this situation, Justice Grier continued, the majority felt compelled to give their views also, but, at that time, he and Nelson would not commit themselves. Since the question was thus forced upon them, Grier had made up his mind to join the majority, so that 'it should not appear that the line of latitude should mark the line of division in the court.' While the Southern Justices agreed in their conclusion, they did so for different reasons; and therefore, said Grier, he would 'concur' with the Chief Justice and try to get 'brothers Daniel and Campbell and

[1] Justice Wayne.

Catron' to do the same thing, so as to avoid 'clashing and inconsistent arguments.'

Still Grier was fearful. The aggressive action of McLean and Curtis had fired the blood of the Justices from the South. 'I fear some rather extreme views may be thrown out by some of our southern brethren,' the Pennsylvania Justice warned Buchanan. However that might turn out, 'six, if not *seven*' Justices would hold the Missouri Compromise to be of no effect; 'but the opinions will not be delivered before Friday the 6th of March. We will not let any others of our Brethren know any thing about *the cause of our anxiety* to produce this result, and though contrary to our usual practice, we have thought it due to you to state to you in candor and confidence the real state of the matter.' [1]

In this wise, it came about that Chief Justice Taney took up the task of writing his celebrated opinion in the Dred Scott case, an opinion with which party rancor and party necessity were to befoul his great reputation for well-nigh half a century. The preparation of that historic paper was for Taney a tremendous undertaking. He was very old and very feeble; he had scarcely more than two weeks in which to do the work; and during that short time he must preside over the Court every day and attend to the other business before it. Aged and weak as he was, his fine mind was as strong and clear as ever, and his convictions on the racial and constitutional questions involved were firm, positive, almost passionate.

On March 4, 1857, the sun rose over flag-bedecked Washington. The usual throngs crowded the hotels, filled the streets, and finally went to the Capitol to witness the inaugural ceremonies. Down Pennsylvania Avenue came the procession, the handsome and still youthful-looking President sitting beside his gray-haired and dignified successor. When the platform at the Capitol was reached, the President and the President-elect took seats for a moment beside the waiting Chief Justice, and polite and casual words were spoken. Unhappy circumstance! That incident was to be made use of with remorseless purpose and dramatic effect as evidence of the charges of conspiracy,

[1] Grier to Buchanan, Feb. 23, 1857. Moore, x, 106–8 *n*. Italics Grier's.

so soon to be flung in the faces of the Nation's Chief Magistrate and the head of the Nation's Judiciary.

When Buchanan rose, relates an unfriendly press correspondent who was there, 'dressed with his habitual precision in a suit of black, and towering above the surrounding throng, the thoughtful gravity of his features hushed the impatient crowd. There was a second of intense quiet, then cheer after cheer rent the air.' [1] When the crowd became still, the President-elect delivered his inaugural address. At the very beginning he made a political mistake. Buchanan said that he would not be a candidate for reëlection, and therefore could have no motive to mar his Administration by personal ambition.

That statement meant that a large part of his influence over his party in Congress and over Democratic leaders throughout the country was gone. Had the President-elect not made it, the politicians would have thought that, old as he was, he might try for another term and distribute patronage and promise, and inflict party punishments accordingly; that was the way of Presidents. In any case, the party managers and local workers would have been left in suspense as to the new President's purposes. But now they knew — four years, and Buchanan was through forever with official life! It was the first tactical error of that unfortunate Administration, and to it was due no small part of the trouble that followed.

He owed his election, declared Buchanan, to the people's inherent love for the Constitution and the Union. In the campaign popular passions had stormed because of deep and vital questions; but, the election over, instant submission followed and all was calm. Such was the result of popular self-government; in no other country on earth could the like be seen.

What a happy thought and deed it had been for Congress to apply the same basic principle to slavery in the Territories! — that wretched question, the agitation of which had done no good and caused much harm. Under popular sovereignty the people of the Territories were now to decide for themselves whether they would have slavery. That was the situation in Kansas. To be sure there was a difference of opinion as to when

[1] Poore, I, 514–5.

that popular decision could be made, whether at the time the Territory became a State, or before.

That was a matter of 'but little practical importance. Besides,' went on Buchanan, 'it is a judicial question, which legitimately belongs to the Supreme Court of the United States, before whom it is now pending, and will, it is understood, be speedily and finally settled. To their decision, in common with all good citizens, I shall cheerfully submit, whatever this may be.'

This was almost exactly what Lincoln, relying on Justice McLean's public statement about the Missouri Compromise, had said scarcely more than six months before.[1]

The dominant note of Buchanan's inaugural was the necessity of public quiet on the distressing problem of slavery in the Territories, and of attention to other matters which were at hand and must be dealt with — the surplus, the tariff, the Pacific railroad, foreign affairs. 'Most happy will it be for the country when the public mind shall be diverted from this question to others of more pressing and practical importance.' [2] To do this, as we shall see, became the supreme purpose of Buchanan's Administration, the source of his inept domestic policies, and, together with his pledge that he would not be a candidate again, the cause of his failure as the leader of his party.

When the President-elect finished speaking, the Chief Justice, in his official robes, tall, thin, scholarly looking, and very frail, rose and administered the Presidential oath. Old as he was, Taney was to live long enough to do the same service for Lincoln four years later. Next day the Chief Justice stayed at home finishing his opinion in the Dred Scott case.[3] But wrath was in store for him. The warlike Pike wrote his paper that the 'Inaugural and coming decision' would be the 'coronation' of the Slave Power: 'That crown must be torn from that brow;' but mere party manœuvring to preserve the Union could not do it — action, strong, militant action was needed.[4]

[1] See Galena speech, p. 418, *supra.* [2] *Messages:* Richardson, v, 430–6.

[3] Dispatch to all Associated Press papers, March 5, 1857.

[4] Washington Correspondence. 'J. S. P.' New York *Tribune,* March 5, in issue March 9, 1857.

The room in which the Supreme Court of the United States heard arguments and delivered opinions was, in 1857, still on the ground floor or basement of the northern wing of the Capitol, where Marshall had presided. 'Broken by pillars and arched walls,' it was in a semi-gloom, the only light coming from the rear windows. Before these, on the floor and not elevated, was a row of nine separate desks with large comfortable chairs for the Justices, who sat with their backs to the windows so that it was hard for auditors to see their faces. A railing separated the judicial desks from the remainder of the room, which was open to spectators as well as to members of the bar.[1]

Through this sombre chamber, at eleven o'clock on the forenoon of March 6, 1857, echoed the measured tones of the Court crier, as his gavel fell:

'The Honorable, the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States!'

The many lawyers and numerous visitors present rose. Slowly and with deliberation, the Chief Justice at their head, the members of the Court entered, bowed to the Clerk, and took their seats. Their robes made them look impressive, although, without gowns, they were men of distinguished appearance.

'Oyez! Oyez!! Oyez!!! All persons having business before the Honorable, the Supreme Court of the United States are admonished to draw near and give their attention, for the Court is now sitting. God save the United States and this Honorable Court.'

The voice of the crier ceased, once more his gavel fell, the audience resumed their seats, and the session began. The decision of the Dred Scott case was now at last to be made public. The room was crowded.[2]

All but two of the Justices were long past middle age, three of them more than seventy, and one was eighty years old.[3]

[1] Warren, II, 200–1, quoting observers.

[2] *Ib.*, 300. *Springfield Republican*, March 7, 1857, and other papers of that date.

[3] The descriptions given in the text of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, when the Dred Scott case was decided, are from Warren, II, 202–4, 316–9; Pike's letter, March 13, in New York *Tribune*, March 17, 1857; *History of the Supreme Court:* Hampton L. Carson, I, 276–354, and other sources.

Next to the Chief Justice and on his right, sat the senior Associate Justice, John McLean of Ohio, a sturdy man, six feet in stature, with high brow, thin hair, gray eyes, dignified, austere, stern. He had been appointed to the Supreme Bench by President Jackson in 1829, was seventy-two years of age, and in service the oldest member of the Court. Next to McLean sat Justice John Catron of Tennessee, a native of Virginia, a stout, solid man of seventy-one, his features benevolent and mild, but dull. He had been appointed by Van Buren in 1837. By his side was Peter Vivian Daniel of Virginia, a tall, bony man with high cheek-bones, dark eyes and complexion, and spirited features — 'old, and long, and lean, and sharp in the visage, . . . a tremulous and fidgety old gentleman in glasses,' as the bitterly hostile Pike described him. He had been made Associate Justice in 1841, was now seventy-three years old, and was torn with grief because of the tragic death of his wife who, some weeks before, had been burned to death.

At the end of the bench was a comparatively young man of forty-eight with 'well-knit' figure, fresh wholesome complexion, square chin, 'fine expressive' eyes, and black hair, Benjamin Robbins Curtis of Massachusetts, appointed by President Fillmore in 1851, on the recommendation of Webster. He came from one of the most highly esteemed families of New England, was a graduate of Harvard, had a winning personality. Justice Curtis was an old line Whig and a stern opponent of the Republican Party on the ground that it was sectional and dangerous to peace and the Union. He had been a member of the Massachusetts Legislature at the time of Sumner's election, which he stoutly resisted on the floor of the House. Speaking as a lawyer, Curtis asserted that the deal by which Boutwell was made Governor and Sumner Senator, 'was a criminal procedure, which subjected the parties to it to a prosecution under the Massachusetts statutes against bribery.' [1] It was to this

[1] New York *Tribune*, Oct. 13, 1858. Curtis wrote the formal 'Address to the People of Massachusetts,' which was signed by 167 members of the Legislature, published in all the newspapers, and widely circulated in pamphlet form. It stated the facts in detail and was severe in the extreme. '*It* [Boutwell-Sumner deal] *is a factious conspiracy to violate a public trust, and as such criminal, not only in morals, but in the law of the land.*' Italics Curtis's. The Address is printed in full in Curtis's *Memoir*, I. 138–50.

'deal' that Douglas made reference in his dramatic rebuke of Sumner in the Senate when closing the debate over the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

To the left of the Chief Justice was James Moore Wayne of Georgia whom Jackson had placed on the Bench in 1835. His specialty was admiralty law, and even Pike admitted that he was 'intelligent.' Wayne was 'an exceedingly handsome man' of sixty-seven, above medium height, stout of figure but graceful, with ruddy cheeks, fine teeth and a thick cluster of wavy, light hair now plentifully streaked with gray. He was 'one of the Chivalry,' and, in his younger days, had been considered a great beau. He was now in poor health, and, for much of the session had kept to his bed. Next to him was Samuel Nelson of New York, made an Associate Justice by President Tyler in 1843, and now in his sixty-sixth year. He was wide-shouldered, of medium height, had a full face, blue eyes, side whiskers, and was accounted a 'handsome man.' He was notably courteous and dignified, and was the best commercial lawyer on the bench. Robert Cooper Grier of Pennsylvania, sixty-three years old, came next, 'blonde and rotund,' with 'angular brow,' strong features, blue eyes. He had been a member of the Court since 1846 in which year he was appointed by President Polk.

At the last desk on the left of the Chief Justice was a powerful looking man two years younger than Justice Curtis, John Archibald Campbell, appointed from Alabama. He was of medium height, had blue eyes, grave features, and a splendid head, which, even then, was bald. His grandfathers on both sides had been officers of the Continental Army under Washington. No man on the Bench surpassed him in intellect and only the Chief Justice and Curtis equalled him in learning. Campbell always appeared to be 'absorbed in thought' and 'to hold all elegance and imagination in utter contempt.' He was the only Justice of the Supreme Court that ever had been chosen at the written request of all the other members of that tribunal.[1] But,

[1] In 1853 Justices Catron and Curtis took to President Pierce a letter signed by the Justices asking that Campbell be appointed, and the Senate promptly confirmed his nomination by a unanimous vote. The press, especially that of the North, applauded his appointment. Connor, 16–8. Judge Connor's narrative is an excellent statement of the life and work of Justice Campbell.

said the correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, just after the Dred Scott decision, Justice Campbell's talents were only 'middling,' he was 'more Southern than the extreme South,' and any opinion by him relating to slavery in any way was of 'no more value than the cawing of a raven.' [1]

All these men were of more than ordinary ability, and two of them — perhaps three — were preëminent in mind and education; all, except McLean and Catron, were college graduates; [2] all had had fine careers at the bar or on the bench before their appointment to the Supreme Court; all had rendered good service on that tribunal. All came of Revolutionary stock, all were of high character, all had led blameless lives.[3] Until the decision of the Dred Scott case, the integrity, independence, and courage of these Justices of the Supreme Court had been universally admitted. Except for the abuse of McLean, Grier, and Curtis by Abolitionists, Free-Soilers, and radical Republicans for upholding the Fugitive Slave Law in charges to Federal Grand Juries, no one had so much as intimated a reflection upon the impartiality of any member of the Court.

The most striking figure at that historic session was the Chief Justice himself, distinguished in appearance, and notable in every way. Roger Brooke Taney, then in his eighty-first year, was a slender, loose-jointed man, slightly above six feet tall. His broad but slanting shoulders drooped, though not from age. His chest always had been so flat as to be 'noticeable.' Physically, Taney was not unlike Marshall and Lincoln; and, like Marshall and Lincoln, he was indifferent to his clothes. His face was long, forehead full and high, eyes blue and mild but unwavering and firm, mouth wide and kind yet determined.

Taney's whole expression was serene, his bearing dignified and bland — 'apostolic,' William Wirt had said, when he and Taney were rivals at the bar. In manner he was quiet; even in arguments to Court or jury when at the bar he made no gestures

[1] 'J. S. P.' in New York *Tribune*, March 13, in issue March 17, 1857.

[2] Taney and Grier, Dickinson College; Wayne and Daniel, Princeton; Curtis, Harvard; Campbell, University of Georgia; Nelson, Middlebury College. Princeton had conferred on Justice Wayne the degree of LL.D., not long before the Dred Scott decision.

[3] All but Campbell rejected Secession, and all but Campbell and Curtis remained on the Supreme Bench through the war or until their death.

and scarcely laid emphasis on words. Although of ardent temperament, he had subdued it by sheer force of will, was without visible emotion, and did not like the display of it by others. But now, said the vindictive Pike, Taney's 'forehead is contracted, his eye sunken, and his visage has a sinister expression.' [1]

The Chief Justice came from one of the old Catholic families of Maryland, and he was religious, even devout. He had been carefully educated, and had been highly trained in the law. Throughout his life he was a lover of literature and read constantly the best books and reviews published in England and in the United States.[2]

At the time of the Dred Scott decision, few lawyers then living had had so varied a career. While still a young man, Taney had succeeded Pinkney and Wirt as the leader of the Maryland bar. He had been Attorney General of that State, and then Attorney General of the United States under Jackson. Taney stanchly supported the policies of the President and became his most trusted adviser. As Secretary of the Treasury, he removed the Government deposits from the Bank of the United States, an act for which the Senate in its war with Jackson refused to confirm him; and, from the same motives, the Senate did the same thing when the President nominated him as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Upon the death of Chief Justice Marshall, Jackson named Taney as his successor; this time the Senate ratified the appointment, and thus, in 1836, he became Chief Justice of the United States.

To follow Marshall worthily was, perhaps, the hardest task any Chief Justice ever had to do; but Taney had done it well and to the surprise of all. In twenty-two years of service he had won the confidence and admiration of the bar and the country, and he was beloved, too, by his associates on the Supreme Bench.[3] His consideration for others, his calmness, courtesy,

[1] 'J. S. P.' in New York *Tribune*, March 13, in issue March 17, 1857.

[2] Tyler, 485.

[3] Resolutions of the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States in memory of Chief Justice Taney, Dec. 6–7, 1864, and speeches of Justice Wayne and leaders of the bar. Tyler, 486–508. Also, and especially, same by Bar of First Circuit at Boston, Oct. 15, 1864, and particularly the address by former Justice Curtis. *Ib.*, 508–16.

'He was indeed a great magistrate, and a man of singular purity of life and character.' George Ticknor Curtis in Curtis's *Memoir*, I, 239.

and 'almost feminine delicacy,' made the consultations of the Court unreserved, frank, and pleasing and the personal relations of the Justices cordial and friendly.[1]

In spite of his deep conviction that the black race was fundamentally inferior to the white and in spite of his thorough belief in negro slavery, the Chief Justice owned no slaves. Early in life he had emancipated those inherited from his father, except two or three who were too old to work; and these he supported throughout their lives.[2] Nor did any other member of the Court that decided the Dred Scott case possess slaves, unless, perhaps, Daniel and Catron owned two or three family house-servants.[3]

Taney always had been frail physically, and, testifies Justice Curtis, his friends would not have been surprised if he had died at any time during the last forty years.[4] But his simple, regular, and abstemious habits, together with his serenity, had kept him alive. In his eighty-first year, his voice, never robust nor loud, was very weak and low; but, says Justice Curtis, the sure and brilliant intellect of the Chief Justice showed no sign of becoming hesitant or dim.

Taney was now suffering from a terrible grief. Only a little more than a year before the decision of the Dred Scott case, his wife had died of yellow fever, and on the following day their last child, Alice, a young woman 'made up of loveliness alone,' also died of that plague.[5] This double blow of fate nearly killed the Chief Justice; it would appear that only his religious fervor saved him. But God had sustained him, he wrote to Curtis in answer to a letter of sympathy, although the tragedy had 'told sensibly upon a body already worn by age, as well as upon the mind; and I shall meet you [at the next session of the Supreme Court] with broken health and with a broken spirit.'[6]

Such was the man who now read, as the opinion of the Court,

[1] Curtis, in Tyler, 508–16. [2] *Washington Union*, June 24, 1857. Tyler, 478.

[3] Upon his appointment to the Supreme Bench Justice Campbell emancipated his household slaves, the only slaves he owned, and, when in Washington, hired free negroes to do housework, since the question of slavery might come before the Supreme Court while he was a member of it. Connor, 71.

[4] Tyler, 509–10. [5] Sept. 29, 30, 1855. *Ib.*, 326.

[6] Taney to Curtis, Baltimore, Nov. 3, 1855. *Ib.*, 327–8. The letter of Justice Curtis was also warmly religious. *Ib.*, 326–7.

the paper that was to become a landmark in American history. The reading took a long time, and now and then his tones were so indistinct that listeners could hardly hear what he said, an incident that added another strand to the knout with which the aged and feeble Chief Justice was soon to be lashed.

Almost at once Taney stated the main question: Under the Constitution, could a negro, the descendant of slaves, become a citizen of a State or of the Nation — a part of the 'political community' which that instrument had created? No! he answered, and, in support of that conclusion, he gave an historical narrative of how the negro race was regarded at the time the Declaration of Independence was adopted, the Constitution framed and ratified, and the Government established. Negroes were not 'then acknowledged as a part of the people,' said Taney. It was hard, 'at this day,' he said, to realize how white people the world over looked upon the blacks during the Revolutionary period. 'They had for more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit. . . . This opinion was at that time fixed and universal in the civilized portion of the white race. It was regarded as an axiom in morals as well as in politics, which no one thought of disputing, or supposed to be open to dispute.'

All the Colonies had slaves at the time of the Revolution, said Taney; and the colonial laws and those of the original States forbade marriage between white and black, even though the negro were free — made such unions crimes and punished as criminals the person who performed such a marriage ceremony, as well as the parties to it. That showed what white people then thought of negroes.

Perhaps the words of the Declaration 'all men are created equal' might be understood in 1857 to include everybody on earth, if the Declaration were written 'at this day;' but they were not so understood at the time it was written. Otherwise the conduct of the framers of that instrument was 'flagrantly

inconsistent' with what they said, and they ought now to be scorned rather than praised. But the framers and signers of the Declaration were uncommonly able, highly educated, and very honorable men — 'great men,' indeed — and knew what they were about. They perfectly understood the words they used, spoke 'in the ordinary language of the day, and no one misunderstood them.'

This was the case, too, when the Constitution was adopted, said Taney. Of course there were then but few slaves in the Northern States, and the institution had 'entirely worn out in one of them.' But this had come to pass because climate and production had proved to be unsuited to such labor, and not in the least because of change in opinion about the black race; witness the African slave trade carried on by citizens of some of these very States — fortunes made and 'without reproach' by this, the 'worst form' in which slavery could be recognized.

And how did the free States continue to regard free negroes? As 'an inferior class,' said the Chief Justice. Look at the marriage laws of those States, their militia statutes, their police regulations, the decisions of their courts! All these things showed that negroes were not considered to be 'citizens' in any State, and, if not, then of course they could not be citizens of the United States. William Wirt, when Attorney General under President Monroe, had given an exhaustive official opinion that free negroes were not citizens;[1] so had the last Attorney General, Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts; and, upon Cushing's opinion Pierce's Secretary of State, William Marcy, had refused passports to emancipated blacks 'as citizens of the United States.'

Citizenship meant membership of the 'political' community and might exist without the exercise of political power, such as voting — women and minors, for instance. On the other hand, States might give persons the right to vote before making them citizens, as in the case of immigrants not yet naturalized. So

[1] 'I am of the opinion that free persons of color in Virginia are not citizens of the United States, within the intent and meaning of the acts regulating foreign and coasting trade, so as to be qualified to command vessels.' From Wirt's opinion, Nov. 7, 1821, as quoted in *Washington Union*, March 21, 1857.

Wirt's opinion, that of Chief Justice Daggett of Connecticut in 1834, and other opinions were published by most Southern and many Northern papers soon after the Dred Scott decision. *Richmond Enquirer*, March 26, 1857.

when free negroes were permitted to vote, they were not thereby made 'citizens of the State, and still less of the United States.' Even if a free negro should be made a citizen of the State where he lived, could he become a citizen of another State where such citizenship was forbidden? Of course not. How then could he be a citizen of the United States?

No change in public opinion could affect the Supreme Court of the United States in giving to the language of the Constitution the meaning that language had when it was written; otherwise the Court would become a 'mere reflex of the popular opinion or passion of the day.' If any part of the Nation's fundamental law was now thought to be unjust, let it be amended as the Constitution provided; 'but while it remains unaltered, it must be construed now as it was understood at the time of its adoption.'

Did the fact that Scott and his wife had lived at Fort Snelling in the Louisiana Purchase make them free? The Missouri Compromise said so; but the Constitution gave Congress no authority to pass such an act.

The power given Congress to 'make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States' had reference only to 'territory which at that time belonged to, or was claimed by, the United States.' That clause of the Constitution was 'a special provision for a known and particular territory, and to meet a present emergency, and nothing more.'

To prove this, the Chief Justice gave a very long and specific account of the history of such territory. This, he said, 'as well as the careful and measured terms in which the article is framed,' showed that he was right. If it meant other territory to be acquired in the future, why did it not say so? — the very argument Lincoln had made in 1854 against the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Of course the Nation could acquire new territory and govern it, but only for the purpose of ultimately making States out of it, and not that of establishing colonies and ruling them despotically. Such territory was acquired by the General Government for the benefit of all the people of the several States 'who

created' the General Government which was 'their trustee.' But in governing that territory Congress was not absolute; it could not do as it pleased. It was controlled by the Constitution which created Congress.

For example, Congress could not establish religion, forbid free speech, deny trial by jury, in the Territories; nor could it deprive any one of life, liberty, and property without due process of law, merely because that person went there to live. These rights of person and property were placed on equal footing in the Constitution; and Congress was 'in express terms' forbidden to take them away from any citizen. If Congress itself could not do that, surely it could not authorize a Territorial Legislature to do it.

Under the Constitution slaves were the property of their owners, and Congress could not destroy that property right of the owner merely because he came himself or brought his property into a particular Territory of the United States — such an act of Congress could hardly be dignified with the name of due process of law. Thus, announced the Chief Justice, the opinion of the Court was that the Missouri Compromise 'is not warranted by the constitution, and is therefore void.'

Taney made brief work of the claim that Dred Scott was made free by living in Illinois. That point had been settled by the Court in an identical case, he said.[1] When he went back to Missouri as a slave, he was governed by the laws of that State as expounded by its Supreme Court.

Before making an end to his long opinion, the Chief Justice sternly rebuked Dred Scott's lawyers for their indirect methods. If they believed that the Supreme Court of Missouri was wrong in deciding against Scott, and that the Supreme Court of the United States had jurisdiction to correct that error, the only legal method of procedure was by a writ of error from the State Supreme Court to the National Supreme Court. If that had been done it was 'too plain for argument that the writ must have been dismissed for want of jurisdiction in this court.'

But, said the Chief Justice, Scott's attorneys did not do that. Instead they let the case be sent back to the trial court 'where it

[1] Strader *et al. vs.* Graham, 10 Howard, 82.

is still continued, and is, by agreement of parties, to await the judgment of this court on the point' of jurisdiction. In this situation the same case had been taken to the Federal Court, the same evidence given, and from the same judgment the same case thus brought to the Supreme Court, 'which the law would not have permitted him to bring directly from the State court.' Such conduct was indefensible. 'It would ill become this court to sanction such an attempt to evade the law, or to exercise an appellate power in this circuitous way, which it is forbidden to exercise in the direct and regular and invariable forms of judicial proceedings.'

With a few formal words, declaring that the Circuit Court could not give any judgment in the case because Scott was not a citizen and directing the suit to be dismissed for want of jurisdiction,[1] the Chief Justice concluded. It had taken him nearly three hours to read his opinion. Exhausted, he sank back in his chair. Justices Nelson and Catron read their separate opinions, the other Associate Justices deferred the reading of theirs until next day, and the Court adjourned.

On Saturday, March 7, 1857, 'a larger number than usual of attentive auditors' were again present when the Court began its session.[2] Justices Wayne, Daniel, Grier, and Campbell read separate concurring opinions; all agreed with the Chief Justice that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional; but Daniel, Catron, and Campbell gave different reasons.[3] Wayne's opinion was positive and brief. One statement in it is vital to an understanding of the reason that the majority said anything at all about the Missouri Compromise. 'The case involved private rights of value, and constitutional principles of the highest importance, about which there had become such a difference of opinion *that the peace and harmony of the country required the settlement of them by judicial decision.*'[4]

In a statement of a single short paragraph, Justice Grier announced his concurrence with Taney;[5] and Justice Nelson delivered the opinion on the question of jurisdiction which he had

[1] Dred Scott *vs.* Sanford, 19 Howard, 399–454; Miller's edition, II, 2–57.
[2] Warren, II, 300. [3] Howard, 469–529; Miller, 72–132.
[4] *Ib.*, 57–60. Italics author's. [5] *Ib.*, 72; Howard, 469.

prepared at the time when the majority had decided not to pass upon the Missouri Compromise.[1]

The opinion of Justice Campbell was worthy of his great reputation. At one point he stated in bold, strong words the theory that had caused dissension since the Government was founded and is still a source of sharp dispute — 'the radical error,' as Campbell called it, 'that the federal government may lawfully do whatever is not directly prohibited by the constitution.' This, said he, 'would have been a fundamental error, if no amendments to the constitution had been made;' but by the tenth amendment, 'the powers of the federal government are limited to the grants of the Constitution.'[2]

The dissent of Justice McLean was not overlong, but it was emphatic in the extreme and delivered with aggressiveness, and it was not wholly without the flavor of politics.[3] He strongly intimated that the Chief Justice had been guilty of sharp practice. 'All slavery has its origin in power, and is against right. . . . Such a discovery [the unconstitutionality of the Missouri Compromise] at this late date is more extraordinary than anything which has occurred in the judicial history of this or any other country. . . . The principle laid down will enable the people of a slave State to introduce slavery into a free State. . . . A slave . . . bears the impress of his Maker, and is . . . destined to an endless existence.'

The ambitious old Justice came near advising public disobedience to the judgment of the Court on the Missouri Compromise. 'Nothing that has been said by them [majority of Court], which has not a direct bearing on the jurisdiction of the court, against which they decided, can be considered as authority. I shall certainly not regard it as such.' And McLean announced the doctrine which Douglas was to advance in his debate with Lincoln at Freeport — the theory that slavery could not exist any-

[1] Miller, 60–72; Howard, 457–69.

[2] Howard, 506; Miller, 109. Another statement of Justice Campbell is of historical importance: 'The sentiment is now (1857) general, if not universal, that congress had no constitutional power to impose the restriction' that Missouri should have a Constitution designated by Congress.

[3] 'McLean surely used words which were almost as extreme as any spoken upon the stump by an anti-slavery orator. . . . No more uncompromising dissent was ever filed.' Steiner, 358.

where except by virtue of municipal law. 'What gives the master the right to control the will of his slave?' asked Justice McLean, and he answered, 'The local law, which exists in some form.' Where there were no such statutes, there could be no slavery.[1]

At last Justice Curtis read his famous dissenting opinion. Swiftly he came to the question whether a free negro whose ancestors were slaves could be a citizen. If 'any such person' could be, then Dred Scott must be so adjudged, since the only fact of record given to show that he was not a citizen was his descent from slaves. If he was the citizen of a State, then he was a citizen of the United States; for that had been true under the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution continued that arrangement.

In five States[2] at that time, free, native-born negroes were not only citizens, but they could vote if they had other necessary qualifications.[3] So they were also citizens of the United States and Congress could not take that right away from them. If it could, it had the power 'to create privileged classes' who, alone, could be citizens of the United States; and the Constitution gave Congress no such power.

Not only did the fundamental law guarantee to the citizens of the several States 'the privileges and immunities of free citizens in the several States,' said Curtis, but the fact was that in five States, at least, free native-born negroes were a part of the people who ratified the Constitution and for whom it was made. So the mere fact that Dred Scott was the descendant of negro slaves was not inconsistent with his citizenship.

The power given Congress to govern territory belonging to the United States was not confined to the domain owned by the National Government when the Constitution was adopted; for, at that time, Georgia and North Carolina had not yet ceded their great tracts, although it was expected that they would do so. Surely the Constitutional provision applied to that territory as well as to the territory already granted by Virginia.

[1] Howard, 529–64; Miller, 132–68.

[2] New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina.

[3] Chiefly of property.

The Constitution was meant to continue indefinitely; so why narrow down a provision of it which was broad enough 'to embrace all territory belonging to the United States throughout all time?' Especially when it was admitted that the Constitution 'authorized the acquisition, from time to time, of other and foreign territory?'

The power given Congress to make rules and regulations for the Territories meant power to legislate for them. The word 'regulate,' or 'regulation,' was used four times in the Constitution; and in every case, it involved legislation — the regulation of interstate commerce, for instance. See what a great body of laws Congress had enacted for that purpose — and municipal laws, too. So Congress could pass any statutes it pleased for the Territories, except as the Constitution forbade. But the fundamental law did not say that Congress should not prohibit slavery in the Territories. Even if that point were doubtful, contemporaneous construction from the beginning of the Government up to the present moment settled the question.

For Congress to prohibit slavery in the Territories did not deprive any citizen of his property without due process of law. If this was not so, then Congress itself had violated the Constitution when it abolished the African slave trade. If an American citizen owned slaves in Cuba and brought them into the United States, they became free under the Federal statute.

Such are imperfect examples of the reasoning by which Justice Curtis showed that the Missouri Compromise was constitutional.

But he made a new point which was not answered and which was conclusive. Dred Scott had married Harriet in free territory where the law gave them that right. A marriage, valid where made, was valid everywhere. Yet, if under Missouri law they again became slaves when they returned to that State, their marriage was also annulled and their children bastardized. The Constitution expressly prohibited any State to make a law impairing the obligations of a contract, and marriage was the most solemn of all contracts. Moreover, when Dr. Emerson consented to that marriage in free territory, he effectually emanci-

pated his slaves. Obviously, the fact of Dred Scott's marriage and Dr. Emerson's consent to it was not made known to the Supreme Court of Missouri, said Curtis.

Like Justice McLean, Justice Curtis also said that slavery was made possible only by local legislation. 'The liability of the master for the torts and crimes of his slave, and of third persons for assaulting or injuring or harboring or kidnapping him, . . . with such police regulations as have existed in all civilized States where slavery has been tolerated, are among the subjects upon which municipal legislation becomes necessary when slavery is introduced.' [1]

At last the Republican press and speakers had something about which they could talk, the anti-slavery and anti-Southern clergy something about which they could preach. Swiftly the storm broke. Greeley ignored the high tribute of his Washington correspondent to Taney which the *Tribune* had printed with approval only two years earlier.[2] The radical Republican editor did not even wait until the opinions were made public before he assaulted the Chief Justice with unleashed fury. Acting only on the scanty synopsis of the opinion sent out by the Associated Press,[3] the *Tribune* said editorially the morning after Taney had read it, that it deserved no more respect than if made by 'a majority of those congregated in any Washington bar-room;'

[1] Howard, 564–633; Miller, 168–237. The Republican press published in full or gave extended synopses of the dissenting opinions of McLean and Curtis. For example, *Illinois Daily State Journal*, March 16, 1857, synopsis; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 17, 18, 19, 1857, dissenting opinions in full, and extracts from that of Taney; New York *Tribune*, March 13, 14, Curtis's opinion in full, etc. That of the Massachusetts Justice was made a major Republican campaign document. It was also printed, together with Taney's opinion, in pamphlet form, and this too was circulated as a Republican campaign document. *Chicago Tribune*, March 14, 1857, and other Republican papers. Taney's and Curtis's opinions, with abstracts of others, were published by the Tribune Association, New York, price, one copy twenty-five cents, five copies one dollar, twelve copies two dollars, one hundred copies fifteen dollars.

[2] The Chief Justice 'has held and exercised a moral balance of power of vast advantage in the interpretation of large constitutional questions, while it served as an effective check upon the latitudinarian dogmas of some of his colleagues. . . . The loss of Judge Taney at any time would be a public calamity; but it would be peculiarly so now, when political considerations are pressed with so much pertinacity.' New York *Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1855, as quoted in Warren, II, 273. The Dred Scott case was then before the Supreme Court and had been for a year.

[3] That a negro, whose ancestors were slaves, could not be a citizen of the United States; and that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional.

it was a mere '*dictum* prescribed by the stump to the bench — the Bowie-knife sticking in the stump ready for instant use if needed;' the decision and Buchanan's inaugural were 'parts of one whole' — both triumphs of slavery.[1]

In the pell-mell race of abuse and misrepresentation, Beecher pressed Greeley hard. Taney had decided that negroes had no rights which the white man were bound to respect, said the radical preacher in his journal.[2] That statement was actually believed and it became the text of all who opposed slavery and attacked the courts. Republican papers took it up and rang the changes upon it.[3] No wonder Taney 'should have sunk his voice to a whisper' when he read the opinion of the slave-holding

[1] New York *Tribune*, March 7, 1857. In addition to press attacks on Taney's opinion, several careful and lengthy reviews by lawyers appeared in legal publications.

The most careful of these was that of Horace Gray (later Justice Supreme Court U.S.) and John Lowell in the *Law Reporter*, June, 1857, and widely circulated as a pamphlet. Yet even these severe critics expressed regretful admiration for Taney: his opinion 'is unworthy of the reputation of that great magistrate, who for twenty years has maintained the position of the intellectual as well as the nominal head of the highest tribunal of the country.'

Noteworthy, also, is an extensive legal argument, entitled 'The Right to Vote,' by E. R. Tyler, in the *New Englander*, Aug., 1857, xv, 478–526. The decision supports 'all those paltry prejudices against the negro race, which are so disgraceful to our countrymen.'

A querulous, combative, and very long attack on the decision was also made by Benton — *Historical and Legal Examination* of the Dred Scott Decision on the Missouri Compromise (1857).

The harshest *Review* was by 'A Kentucky Lawyer' (Louisville, 1857), for the South was not solid for the decision.

A scathing article, written by Timothy Farrar, appeared in the *North American Review*, Oct., 1857, LXXXV, 392–415: 'The decision is, therefore, authority for nothing.'

Other less important reviews were too numerous to be cited. Taney saw all of them, but would make no reply because, as he said, they were 'founded upon misrepresentations and perversions of the points decided by the Court;' and if 'exposed, they would nevertheless be repeated, and new ones invented to support them; he would not waste time on those who acted on the principle that 'the end will justify the means.' Tyler, 607–8.

Nevertheless, the Chief Justice, the year following the Dred Scott decision, did prepare a 'supplement' to it. This supplement was called forth by a decision of the Federal Court for the District of Indiana that an American-born negro, whose ancestors had not been brought to America as slaves, was a citizen of the United States.

Taney examined judicial decisions and public records in England and America from the middle of the 17th century down to the adoption of the Constitution in support of the Court's decision; and he reasserted at length his former arguments. From this point of view his essay is strong. It is printed in full in Tyler, 578–608.

In recent years a review of the Dred Scott decision by Professor Edward S. Corwin of Princeton, in his *Doctrine of Judicial Review* (1914), 129–57, is notable.

[2] *Independent*, March, 1857. [3] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 16, 1857.

majority — for it was mostly a pack of lies, and had no more weight than a stump speech.[1]

From the first, the charge of conspiracy was made — 'a conspiracy . . . of the most treasonable character,' to deliver the Government 'into the hands of the Slave oligarchy.'[2] The Court's decision had been rendered by slave-holders and doughfaces at the dictation of the Slave Power, and was another step in the plot of which the Kansas-Nebraska Act was a part.[3] Day in and day out, the New York *Tribune* belabored the Court. At first it urged disobedience,[4] then the 'readjustment' of that tribunal so as to reverse the Dred Scott decision,[5] then the arming of the North for 'resistance' to the invasion of the rights of the free States.[6] Even moderate Republican papers said that the Court had decided 'that slave labor and free labor are equal before the constitution and laws of the United States.'[7]

Quite as bellicose and fiery as the radicals of the East was the Republican press of the West. A decision by slave-holders and 'doughfaces;' under it slavery was to be forced upon the free States; it brought 'visions of coffle-gangs on their way through Illinois or Indiana to Kansas or Minnesota;' Chicago might become a 'slave market and that men, women, and children may be sold off the block in our streets;' the decision was 'a part of

[1] New York *Tribune*, March 10, 1857. These attacks did not cease with Taney's death. In 1865 a terrible pamphlet against him, entitled *The Unjust Judge*, was widely circulated: he had been made Chief Justice because Jackson hated the Supreme Court; his judicial opinions were 'too trivial and dull, even to be read;' he had been the worst of all judges except Pontius Pilate, etc., etc.

[2] *New York Evening Post*, clipped in *Liberator*, March 20, 1857.

[3] New York *Tribune*, March 21, 1857, editorial. 'The five slaveholders who made this decision.' *Ib.*, April 1, 1857. 'The slaveholders' majority in the Supreme Court of the United States.' *Ib.*, April 2, 1857. 'The slaveholders' decision.' *Ib.*, April 11, *et seq.*

[4] 'All the freedom which we enjoy has been won by resistance to power, and only after vigorous struggles with crowned rascals and unjust judges.' *Ib.*, March 14, 1857.

[5] *Ib.*, March 16, 1857.

[6] 'We intend to strike directly at the usurping power. . . . Forced into war, driven into straits where one party or the other must sink, we go for sinking Slavery. . . . The Free States, acting in their own separate and independent capacity, must accomplish the work. . . . They must train their people, and organize their military resources, not for war but for defense. They must assert their sovereignty, and be ready to defy all possible assaults upon it. . . . The North must learn to *act* as well as talk. . . . Usurpation must be met by revolt. . . . The States must move directly upon the object they combat.' Pike's Washington letter, March 23, in issue March 27, 1857.

[7] *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*, March 7, 1857.

the grand conspiracy against Freedom.' [1] In Springfield, Illinois, the Republican organ declared that according to the Supreme Court 'slaveholders of Missouri can bring their slaves into Illinois, . . . thus virtually making our soil a *slave State*. . . . Freedom and white men are no longer safe.' [2]

The decision was 'infamous,' it had 'aroused the whole North!' Let the Justices of the Supreme Court be elected by the people, an Illinois country editor cried on the same day that Taney read his opinion. Those who knew the fate of slaves were 'aroused to the terrible calamity of such a doom' as that to which Dred Scott and his family had been condemned.[3] Taney, his 'brother slave-holders,' and the two Northern 'doughfaces' on the Supreme Bench, were 'the abject tools of the slave Oligarchy;' [4] let a Convention of the Northwestern States be called and the people 'take their government into their own hands;' [5] cause 'every living thing in the sixteen free States, to be draped in mourning;' [6] let a 'Grand Northern League for self-protection' be formed, and let every Republican State pass statutes treating as kidnappers those United States Marshals who tried to execute the Fugitive Slave Law, denying appeals to Federal Courts; and let it back those State laws by its 'whole police and military force, . . . in opposition to any power.' Of course, this might violate the Constitution and 'clash with the United States authorities — *but what of that?*' [7]

Even more fierce were the clergy. Typical of sermons against all human law which anybody thought to be in conflict with 'God's law,' was one preached April 5, 1857, by Rev. George Barrell Cheever, pastor of the Church of the Puritans in New York. Statesmanship could not be separated from conscience, he said, nor religion from politics. When sin and Satan usurped power, it was 'the duty of everyone to disobey. . . . Such a government ought to be put out of existence, as a piracy against mankind. . . . Our submission is sin. . . . Suppose our govern-

[1] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 13, 14, 16, 17, *et seq.*, 1857.
[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, March 9, 19, 24, *et. seq.*, 1857. Italics *Journal's*.
[3] *Aurora Daily Beacon*, March 6, 11, 1857. [4] *Rockford Register*, March 21, 1857.
[5] *Quincy Whig* and *Belleville Advocate*, Apr. 8, 1857.
[6] *Urbana Union*, Apr. 16, 1857. [7] *Aurora Daily Beacon*, Apr. 18, 1857.

ment becomes so perverted that a revolution becomes necessary — what then? It takes virtue to make a revolution.' [1]

With sad and regretful calmness the Chief Justice bore the abuse. 'At my time of life when my end must be near, I should have enjoyed to find that the irritating strifes of this world were over, and that I was about to depart in peace with all men and all men in peace with me,' he wrote to former President Pierce. 'Yet perhaps it is best as it is. The mind is less apt to feel the torpor of age when it is thus forced into action by public duties. And I have an abiding confidence that this act of my judicial life will stand the test of time and the sober judgment of the country.' [2]

Moderate papers denounced 'religious firebrands' like Cheever and Beecher, who would overthrow all civil government; their purpose was to set up a 'theocracy' in the place of 'our representative and judicial systems;' politicians would make use of such 'religious fanaticism' for party purposes; if a stop was not put to it, there probably would be 'a terrible political revolution in 1860.' [3]

In alarm the *New York Herald* said, two days after it published Cheever's sermon, that the excitement was spreading; that three thousand New England preachers would soon be following

[1] *New York Herald*, April 9, 1857, which printed Cheever's sermon in full that its readers might see what radical preachers were saying. It was one of a course of such sermons delivered by Cheever, who attracted great crowds. Most anti-slavery preachers soon concentrated their attacks upon the Supreme Court. *Illinois Daily State Register*, March 24, 26, 1857.

[2] Taney at Fauquier Sulphur Springs, Virginia, to Pierce at Concord, N. H., Aug. 29, 1857. *Am. Hist. Rev.*, x, 358–9. Taney said that the attacks were like those made on him when, as Secretary of the Treasury, he removed the deposits — 'in the same spirit and by many of the same men.'

Rev. Samuel Nott, Congregational minister at Wareham, Mass., one of the famous Nott family of clergymen and educators, wrote a remarkable pamphlet in which he approved Taney's opinion, and sent his essay to the Chief Justice.

Taney made answer in a long letter describing, in moderate and obviously truthful terms, the relations of master and slave, and, in general, Southern conditions with reference to slavery and abolition.

As to the Dred Scott decision, Taney said that he hoped Dr. Nott's 'fair' review would 'correct some of the misrepresentations which have so industriously been made, and . . . by many . . . .who must have known better.' But Taney would not violate judicial proprieties, he said, by controversy with untruthful assailants. 'The opinion must be left to speak for itself.' Taney to Nott, Aug. 19, 1857. *Proceedings Mass. Hist. Socy.*, XII, 445–7.

[3] *New York Herald*, April 9, 1857, editorial.

his example; that 'the whole North will evidently be preached into rebellion against the highest constituted Court in the country;' that the radicals wanted a revolution like that which followed the Stamp Act, a new Lexington, and Bunker Hill, on the ground of slavery, civil war with the South — our own kindred — servile insurrections, the burning of cities, the massacre of women and children, commerce stopped, industry ruined, and all 'because the Supreme Court decides that negroes are not citizens.' [1]

Such papers as the New York *Times* at first sternly condemned the decision, albeit in restrained terms. 'No issue will probably ever be made upon it before the people — for the practical settlement of the question will anticipate any political result that might be reached.' But these cautious journals quickly became frightened and urged moderation. The agitation could result in 'no practical good;' it meant either nullification or a change in the Constitution; the decision must be reversed; but until then its authority must be acknowledged; the resolution proposed in the Legislature of New York — 'fulmination of a decree of contempt against the Supreme Court of the United States' — was not the way to go about it. 'No power on earth can establish slavery in the State of New York.' [2] Such papers soon stopped saying anything at all about the Dred Scott case. But, said the *Springfield Republican*, which severely criticized the decision, the situation was a fulfilment of Jefferson's prophecy that the Supreme Court would sap and undermine the Constitution.[3]

No lawyer, however, who was not in politics, questioned the integrity of the Supreme Court, or of any member of it. Writing in the *Memoir* of Justice Curtis, twenty-two years after the decision, his brother, George Ticknor Curtis, when criticizing the majority opinions in the Dred Scott case, gave his own view: 'No imputation is . . . cast upon the purity and good intentions of any of the judges.' [4]

The one point made by all who disapproved the decision, was

[1] *New York Herald*, April 11, 1857, editorial.

[2] New York *Times*, March 7, 9, April 11, 1857.

[3] *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*, March 21, 1857. [4] Curtis's *Memoir*, I, 207.

that it had not been necessary for the Court to do more than to pass upon the question of jurisdiction; all beyond that was *obiter dictum*, they said. Why decide the merits of the case, why go into the Missouri Compromise at all? This argument had more weight with the bar than all others, and it deeply influenced popular sentiment. Lincoln, however, was silent on that topic; but we shall presently hear Douglas make answer to it in terms of the stump.[1]

The conservative press finally came to the conclusion that the Dred Scott decision was a mere abstraction and amounted to nothing practically. 'The idea that any decision of the Supreme Court can re-establish slavery in the Free States is a bugbear — an absurdity. . . . It can have no practical effects.' Slavery must ultimately be decided by the laws which govern labor and production. 'If we would but permit Nature to have her own way for only a few short years!' The 'hotheads of the press and of the pulpit' were causing all the trouble.[2]

Democratic papers denounced the 'infamous and brutal' attacks on the Supreme Court, upheld the decision, and declared that the Republican crusade against it raised the issue of the Constitution and the laws as opposed to revolution and anarchy. Patriotic people would hold the decision to be a 'final settlement of grievous sectional issues,' and therefore 'almost the greatest political boon, . . . since the foundation of the republic.'[3] It came at the right time and would restore 'harmony and fraternal concord throughout the country.'[4] The case had been instituted 'solely by those who now complain of the result;' and, having lost, they were, for the same purpose, attempting 'now to appeal from the decisions of the judiciary to political club rooms.'[5]

Why should the Republicans object to the decision that

[1] In his *Doctrine of Judicial Review*, 156, Professor Corwin demonstrates that 'the Dred Scott decision was not *obiter dictum*.'

[2] *Harper's Weekly*, March 28, 1857, as quoted in Warren, II, 314, citing also *National Intelligencer*, May 29, 1857.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, March 19, 1857, and *Cincinnati Enquirer*, clipped in *ib.*, March 31, 1857; *New Hampshire Patriot* in *Washington Daily Union*, March 21, 1857.

[4] *Washington Union*, March 12, 1857. [5] *Ib.*, March 19, 1857.

negroes could not be citizens? The Free-State 'Topeka Constitution' said the same thing.[1]

How shameful the personal assaults on Taney! He was very old, very feeble, had 'no political future,' kept his office only by virtue of the Constitution, and therefore, was without motives for deciding any question except 'those of impartial justice and honest patriotism.'[2] It was the Constitution which the 'black Republican press' were really assailing;[3] Republican fury at the decision was because it destroyed the sectional party's platform.[4]

Southern newspapers, of course, hailed the decision as right and wise. The highly conservative *Alexandria Gazette*, citing former decisions, said that the question was an old one and that 'the same opinion [as that of the Court] was held throughout the country until the era of negro-worship commenced.' The issue now was whether the Constitution and laws should be upheld.[5] Moderately radical papers in the South rejoiced that 'the *nation* has achieved a triumph, *sectionalism* has been rebuked,' and the 'diabolical doctrines inculcated by factionists and fanatics' shattered by a tribunal as 'learned, impartial and unprejudiced as perhaps the world had ever seen;' but the sectionalist partisans, 'regardless of the laws of God or man,' would now assail the Judiciary and the Constitution, even to the destruction, if necessary, of the Union itself.[6]

It was to be expected that 'the Northern Geographical Sectional Party' would rage, now that its very foundation had been swept away, and even Kansas had 'ceased "to bleed"'; but, reckless as the Republicans were, it was a little surprising that they should dare, 'as a party,' to make war on the Supreme Court.[7] The South always had been willing to submit 'those great constitutional questions to the Supreme Court, and abide

[1] *Eastern* (Me.) *Argus*, as quoted in *Washington Union*, March 21, 1857.

[2] *Washington Union*, March 21, 1857, editorial, in reply to attacks on Taney by the New York *Tribune*.

[3] The *Pennsylvanian*, as quoted by *Washington Union*, March 14, 18, 1857.

[4] *Ottawa* (Ill.) *Free Trader*, March 14, April 18; *Joliet* (Ill.) *Signal*, March 31, 1857.

[5] March 16, 18, 1857.

[6] *Richmond Enquirer*, March 10, 13, 1857. Italics *Enquirer's*.

[7] *New York Express*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 13, 1857.

its judgment;' but the Northern sectional party always rebelled when it lost; so 'we do not wonder at the indecent demonstrations of these Black Republican journals.' [1]

Southern secessionist papers, however, saw in the onslaught of radical Republican editors, preachers, and politicians, additional and conclusive evidence of Northern hostility to the South and to anything and everything that stood in the way of the sectional party; the South was in the minority and growing weaker every year, the North in the majority and rapidly increasing in strength; the North believed that the majority should govern regardless of minority rights guaranteed by the Constitution and declared by the Courts; look at the frantic revilement of the Nation's Judiciary by pulpit and press, the invasion of Virginia by Eli Thayer in continuation of his money-making scheme to abolitionize Kansas, the throngs at Cheever's sermons! '*Delenda est Carthago!*' had become the war cry of the North, its resolve 'the South subverted under a Northern dominion.' [2]

In the North, radical stump speakers made the most of their opportunity. 'A huge judicial lie has been palmed off upon you,' cried Frederick Douglass to an abolition audience in New York.[3] But the most effective appeal was the charge that the decision was the fruit of conspiracy — not the regular process of independent and honest judicial deliberation, but the carrying out of a plot. In the Senate, a year later, Seward repeated the same things that had been said throughout the North from the time the Dred Scott decision was made public.

He hinted that the suit had been brought in order to get the decision that finally had been made; spoke darkly of 'chicane in special pleading;' charged that the President had 'approached' the Supreme Court, intimating that this was done to make sure that nothing went amiss in the Slave Power's plans. Counsel for Dred Scott had volunteered 'from motives of charity,' while their opponents had been 'paid by the defending slaveholder;' the whole argument had been a mere 'mock debate,' and the

[1] *South Side Democrat*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, March 18, 1857.

[2] *Charleston Mercury*, April 21, clipped in *New York Herald*, April 30, 1857.

[3] New York *Times*, May 15, 1857.

Court had given their decision to please the incoming President. This was 'judicial usurpation' — 'more odious and intolerable than any other among the manifold practices of tyranny.'

With the dramatist's art and skill Seward conjured the scenes at the inauguration — the 'coalition' of Judiciary and Executive to 'undermine the national legislature and the liberties of the people;' the whisperings carried on between the President and the Chief Justice without the crowd knowing their import; the deceitful statement of Buchanan spoken in tones as 'bland as that which the worst of all the Roman emperors pronounced when he assumed the purple,' that the extrajudicial decision would soon be made and that he would submit to it as final.

'The pageant ended. On the 5th of March, the judges, without even exchanging their silken robes for courtiers' gowns, paid their salutations to the president, in the executive palace.' It was like Charles the First receiving the base magistrates 'who had at his instance subverted the statutes of English liberty.' The very next morning Dred Scott was sent back to slavery; but from the first he had been a mere '*dummy*' in this political game, unwittingly, yet to the complete satisfaction of his adversary and was at once given his freedom as a reward.[1]

Thus, with cold deliberation, did the supreme Republican national leader give voice in the Senate to what had been said by radical journals, politicians, and preachers all through the North from the time the Dred Scott decision was announced in the press. Although Reverdy Johnson, publicly and at once, pointed out Seward's falsehoods and declared that the Supreme Court had been from mere party ends subjected to as calumnious an attack as ever dishonored human lips,[2] the New York Senator never took back a word of his charges. Yet only two years before, Seward had written to Taney asking his permission to dedicate one of Seward's speeches to him, as tribute to his purity of

[1] March 3, 1858. *Works*, IV, 585–8.

[2] Tyler, 385–91. So bitterly did Taney resent Seward's attack upon the Supreme Court, that he told Samuel Tyler that if Seward had been nominated and elected President, the Chief Justice would have refused to administer the official oath. *Ib.*, 391. And see *Seward:* Bancroft, I, 448.

character and eminent services as Chief Justice of the United States.[1]

But the language of the stump had been far bolder, that of the radical press far less restrained, than even Seward's words. The legislatures of seven Northern States [2] passed resolutions which amounted to an attack on the Court, a repudiation of its decision, an assertion of the most extreme doctrine of States' Rights. The Massachusetts Supreme Court would 'not heed the Dred Scott decision,' declared Theodore Parker.[3] Moreover, the partisan charges against Taney and the Court continued to be made and were actually believed, long after the Civil War was over.[4]

A week after the decision his constituents began to complain of Representative Chaffee. Did his wife have 'any interest in the ownership of Dred Scott and his family?' No! answered the *Springfield Republican;* 'We have been assured that these slaves long since passed out of the control of Mrs. Chaffee,' and, of course, her present husband had nothing to do with the matter.[5]

In an open letter, Chaffee promptly denied that he or his wife had any property right whatever to the negroes or any power to free them.[6] Two months later, May 13, 1857, Chaffee and his

[1] Tyler, 317–8. Taney declined.

[2] Massachusetts, New York, Maine, Ohio, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut.

[3] Parker to Miss Grover, Nov. 6, 1857. Weiss, II, 235–6.

[4] 'The Chief Justice proceeded to carry out the intentions, if not the instructions, of the Slave Power.' The decision 'was felt to be one of a series of slaveholding encroachments, the culmination of past and the precursor of those yet in store; because it was regarded as a foul stain upon the sacred ermine of the court.' Wilson, II, 527, 533 (1875).

[5] Open letter by 'Inquirer' to *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*, March 13, in issue March 14, 1857. 'Our own opinion is that the case was made up at St. Louis, for the purpose of testing this question, and getting just the opinions which the majority of the court has given, and that Mr. Sanford, who has acted as defendant, had no active interest or personal motive in the case. We imagine that . . . it has been pushed on political grounds for political purposes.'

[6] Chaffee to editor of the *Republican*, March 14, in issue March 16, 1857. 'There is no earthly consideration that could induce me to exercise proprietorship in any human being; for I regard Slavery as a sin against God and a crime against man. In the case of Dred Scott, the defendant [Sanford] was and is the only person who had or has any power in the matter, and neither myself nor any member of my family were consulted in relation to, or even knew of the existence of the suit till after it was noticed for trial, when we learned it in an accidental way.'

Chaffee's letter was reprinted in New York *Tribune*, March 17, and thence copied

wife sold the Scott family to Taylor Blow of St. Louis 'for the purpose solely of the "*emancipation* of the family,"' and ten days afterward, they were set free.[1]

In view of the tempest in the press, the pulpit, and on the stump, a curious mass of negative evidence as to the state of the public mind thrusts itself upon us at this point. A large number of letters were written to Trumbull from all over Illinois; they came from farmers, merchants, hotel keepers, mechanics, editors, county and State officials, all members of the new party and eager for its success; for the most part they told the Senator what the people were saying and what was needed to win the next election — in short they were typical political letters such as always are sent to every man in public life. Yet, from the time of the Dred Scott decision for the ten remaining months of that year, only three of these numerous letters make any mention whatever of that case: one by a country lawyer late in May; [2] one by Koerner, congratulating Trumbull on his answer to Douglas at Springfield in July; [3] and one by the editor of a small paper at Danville who, in a long letter, gave but a sentence to the Dred Scott decision.[4]

Even Herndon, the most frequent and gossipy of Trumbull's correspondents, said nothing to the Senator about the Dred Scott decision. But to Theodore Parker, the radical abolition preacher in Boston, the junior partner wrote flaming letters: the Supreme Court had 'ruined itself; . . . calm, cool, philosophic men grit their teeth and — swear;' all good lawyers 'curse' the decision; he saw 'hell-gloom' on men's faces; the people were 'stunned and are now ready to flee or fight — don't care which;' Democratic editors were damning the Supreme Court for having ruined their party; they didn't say so, of course, but Herndon could see it 'in their eye.' [5] None of this stirring news, however,

into Republican papers generally. It was the device of an officeholder and politician, and was without truth.

[1] New York *Times*, Sept. 21, 1857. Channing, VI, 197.

[2] T. P. Cowen, Petersburg, Ill., to Trumbull, May 26, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Koerner to Trumbull, July 4, 1857. *Ib.*

[4] W. P. Haskel, editor of the *Danville* (Ill.) *Independent*, April 6, 1857. The editor says that he will propose Trumbull for the Presidency — the 'West must be recognized.' *Ib.*

[5] Herndon to Parker, March 10, 30, April 8, May 14, 1857. Newton, 109–16.

did Herndon report to Trumbull whom he ought to have kept posted; for Herndon owed to the Senator and Lincoln his recent appointment to the important and lucrative office of State Bank Commissioner,[1] an important fact which we must have in mind from now on.

The great quantity of letters to Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire, by the same kind of people who wrote to Trumbull, displays even greater indifference than is shown in Trumbull's political correspondence. On the day the New York *Tribune* branded the Court's opinion as a 'bar-room' decision, the Chairman of the Republican Committee of Columbia County, at Hudson, New York, and the President of a Republican Club at the same place, wrote to Hale a joint letter asking him to deliver a lecture for them some time in June on the Dred Scott case. Nothing was said about it in any other letter to Hale during the whole of that year.[2]

During this same time, Orville H. Browning, who, as we have seen, was one of the best lawyers in Illinois, a founder of the Republican Party in that State and one of its most active leaders, was constantly travelling the circuit, or practising at his home in Quincy, or before the State Supreme Court in Springfield. Browning kept a diary with minute and meticulous care. In it he made note of what took place, what he said, did, or heard — the weather, hotels and food, sermons or lectures, political meetings, arguments in court, the persons upon whom he called socially, and the like. During all of 1857, the only entry making reference to the Dred Scott case says that in Springfield Douglas made a speech upon it.[3]

Until that time, indeed, there had been a political 'lull' in Illinois, testifies Herndon.[4]

[1] Herndon to Trumbull, March 2, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

[2] John Stanton Gould and Hiram W. Dixon to Hale, March 7, 1857, on letterhead of Republican Reading Rooms, Hudson, N.Y. Hale MSS., New Hampshire Historical Society.

The people must be made ready 'for the specific action which may be ultimately agreed upon. In order to accomplish this object no time should be unnecessarily lost nor should the wave of popular enthusiasm which swept over us last fall be allowed to subside.'

[3] Browning's *Diary*, I, 289, June 12, 1857.

[4] Springfield Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, June 30, issue July 6, 1857, undoubtedly by Herndon.

ORVILLE H. BROWNING

Still more puzzling is the absence of all comment in the correspondence of Southern leaders. At this very time, Toombs, Stephens, Cobb, then Secretary of the Treasury, and other politicians of that section wrote many letters to one another, almost entirely on political subjects.[1] Yet the only remark about the Dred Scott decision is a casual statement by Cobb that he is sending to Stephens a pamphlet containing Taney's opinion — and this at the beginning of a long letter marked 'Private,' wholly devoted to politics, chiefly about Kansas.[2] Indeed, in all private political correspondence, North and South, during those months, plenty is said about Kansas, the Mormons, public lands, hard times; but practically nothing about the judicial pronouncement which radical newspapers, preachers, and politicians were loudly declaring had prepared the way to spread slavery over the whole land, and therefore had convulsed with rage the people of the North.

Upon the horizon of Kansas, storm clouds were again rising. The Legislature had provided for the election of delegates to a convention to frame a State Constitution; but the old Free-State, now the Republican Party, and in the overwhelming majority, said that they would not vote because only those who were registered could do so and no registration had been made in half of the counties; and also because the law had been passed by the 'bogus' legislature which they had refused to recognize. All this was true, but another motive strengthened their resolution; they wished to keep rigid their party's almost military discipline and feared that it would be weakened if they took part in such an election, an idea encouraged if not suggested by some Republican newspaper and managers outside the Territory. Moreover, the Free-State Party had refused in some counties to permit any registration to be made.

In Utah, actual conditions were much worse, except that there the slavery question was not involved and, especially — and, indeed of consequence — the fight between political parties did not becloud what took place as it did in Kansas. The Mormon revolt was one of the gravest problems the new Administra-

[1] *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 398–462.

[2] Cobb to Stephens, July 23, 1857. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 407.

tion had to handle. But it was more political shot in the Republican locker; here, said they, was another foul offspring of popular sovereignty. Polygamy in Utah! Slavery in Kansas! What next? Soon the whole Nation would become a sink of bondage and filth.

Such was the state of things when the second clash between Lincoln and Douglas came. We are now swiftly approaching the last phase of the struggle of these men for the Senate, or rather for the Presidential nomination by their respective parties; and we must bear in mind that the Senatorial contest really began in 1854 when Lincoln made his great Peoria Speech in answer to Douglas, and that his reply to the Democratic Chieftain, to which we are now to listen, was but a continuation of the fight which is soon to reach its final stage in the celebrated Lincoln-Douglas debates.

A few weeks after Congress adjourned Douglas came back to Chicago, and early in June went to Springfield for a few days' visit. The United States Court was in session and the Federal Grand Jury, by formal resolution, asked him to make a speech on Kansas, Utah, and the Dred Scott decision. Douglas accepted, and he and the Grand Jury, which called on him in a body on Wednesday, June 10, agreed on the following Friday night, June 12, as the date for the meeting.[1]

Douglas spoke in the Hall of Representatives which was not big enough to hold the crowd that came to hear him. Governor Matteson presided.[2] 'We were pleased to see in attendance Col. W. H. Herndon, the Hon. A. Lincoln,' etc., said the Democratic organ next day, with patronizing sarcasm.[3] The speech of the Little Giant was one of the most important of his life, although

[1] Springfield Correspondence, *Chicago Times*, June 12, clipped in *Washington Union*, June 20, 1857. The custom of Grand Juries to make such requests and even to express, by resolutions, their opinions on grave public questions, had not then been abandoned; but it usually was done at the suggestion of the Federal Judge or District Attorney. However, it was arranged in this instance, and it was not wholly partisan, since men of all parties were members of the Grand Jury.

[2] The throng was 'unprecedented in the annals of political assemblages,' the Hall 'a perfect jam.' *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 13, 1857. The *State Register* printed the Grand Jury's resolutions for two issues before the meeting.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 15, 1857. Also see Lincoln's statement, *Works*, II, 315.

it is possible that he did not then realize that fact. He was the outstanding leader of his party, without a rival in the North and with no one in the South who could match him in dominance of personality or strength of mind; and he was now to state the program of his party and to formulate the issues upon which it would make its next fight.

Douglas was in good physical condition, better than he had been for several years. Everybody made note of the improvement — his skin was clearer, his clothes neater, his manner, if prouder than ever, kind, even urbane. We shall presently see the reason for this change, a reason that affected his state of mind when he made, as he soon did, one of the most daring decisions that any politician ever made.

Douglas spoke extemporaneously, with unwonted deliberation but with his usual force. He afterwards wrote out what he said for publication, an incident of which, as we shall see, the Republican press made vigorous use. He was surer than ever, he said, that the principle of popular sovereignty was right. By the election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention, Kansas was about to speak for herself. All was now peaceful in that hitherto distracted Territory. If, for partisan purposes, any faction, 'acting under the advice of political leaders in distant States,' should refuse to vote in order to leave 'the free state democrats in a minority,' and a pro-slavery constitution was thus secured against the wishes of a majority of the people, the responsibility must be placed upon the shirkers. 'Upon them and upon the political party for whose benefit and under the direction of whose leaders they act, let the blame be visited.'

What should be done in Utah was plain, said Douglas. If it should prove to be true that unnaturalized foreigners there and others, acting as an organization under a spurious government of their own, were defying the National Government and threatening to subvert it, setting afoot armed bands of murderers and driving out all other immigrants, let the President at once send all the military force that might be required to enforce the laws of the land: let Congress promptly abolish Territorial Government in Utah and place that country under military laws applicable to it. That was the way to deal with treason and crime,

that was the way to handle alien enemies and outlaws, thundered Douglas. Popular sovereignty did not apply to such people, because they were not citizens and they rejected the sovereignty of the United States.[1] The crowd cheered madly.

Popular sovereignty exercised by good citizens, would banish sectional strife and bring once more throughout the Nation that concord and brotherhood which had 'animated the fathers of the revolution.' Already the slavery issue had dwindled down to the narrow limits of the Dred Scott decision. Yet even before the opinions in that case could be published, a partisan press began to pour forth torrents of abuse and misrepresentations, Douglas charged. It had even assailed the character and motives of the venerable Chief Justice and his illustrious associates, and was continuing to do so.

If, incited by partisan leaders, the outcome of all this should be 'violent resistance to the final decision of the highest judicial tribunal on earth,' then the friends of order and constitutional government must rally under the 'glorious banner of the Union' against lawlessness and faction. That was the first and highest duty of every citizen of a free republic, declared Douglas. In America the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution was the highest law; the Courts — established by the Constitution, established by the people themselves — were the expounders of that law; and resistance to the final decision of the greatest of these tribunals was 'a deadly blow to our whole republican system of government.'

Thus Douglas marked out the first Democratic line of attack in the coming battle with the Republicans.

One ground for assault upon the Supreme Court, said Douglas, was that it had passed upon the merits of the case, instead of dismissing it for want of jurisdiction; and he insisted that the Court was right, legally and morally right, in deciding the main questions, all of which were really presented by the record as the Court had pointed out. But, he continued, suppose the Court had done as its foes now said it ought to have done, and thrown the case out on the point of jurisdiction? The result would have

[1] Douglas's argument on Utah was very long, with citations of laws and precedents, and no one then or thereafter controverted it.

been to 'remand Dred Scott and his children to perpetual slavery' on mere technicalities, leaving the real issue untouched.

What would the assailants of the Court have done then? Their fury would have been even greater than it was now; they would have denounced the Court 'with increased virulence and bitterness' for 'having remanded Dred Scott to perpetual slavery without first examining the merits of his case and ascertaining whether he was a slave or not.' Worse still, they would have done this 'with much more plausibility and show of fairness' — a man condemned on technicalities by a Court that dodged the merits of the case!

The decision that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional and that Congress could not destroy the right of the master to his slave, firmly established the great principle of popular sovereignty and vindicated the Kansas-Nebraska Act which put that principle into the form of law, Douglas contended. While Congress could not extinguish the slave-holder's right, it was 'a barren and a worthless right, unless sustained, protected and enforced by appropriate police regulations and local legislation, prescribing adequate remedies for its violation. These regulations and remedies must necessarily depend entirely upon the will and wishes of the people of the territory as they can only be prescribed by the local legislatures.'

Thus Douglas once more asserted the doctrine that local friendly legislation was indispensable to the existence of slavery, a doctrine he had announced seven years before in the historic Senate debate of 1850. James L. Orr of South Carolina, who, next to Stephens, was accounted the best lawyer and ablest Southern man in the House of which he was soon to be elected Speaker, and who was a fighting advocate of slavery, had said the same thing with even stronger emphasis during the heated dispute in that body over Kansas in 1856.[1]

Lincoln is to make much of this point in his debate with

[1] Orr was a strong Union man, typical of the large number of Southern men who believed in the right of secession but opposed it as bad policy. On the ground that disunion would be ruinous to the South, Orr resisted the secession of South Carolina to the very last; but when, in spite of his opposition, his State withdrew, he went with it because he thought that it had the constitutional right to secede if the majority wished, and that his first loyalty was due to his State.

Douglas next year; and the 'Freeport Doctrine' is to be exploited by the Republicans as a new device of the shifty Douglas which he was forced to adopt to escape, for a moment, the trap Lincoln set for him — a trap, moreover, into which Douglas really fell and thus lost the Presidency. In a moment we shall see how more than a year before the Freeport debate, Lincoln dealt with the theory of friendly local legislation; for he is presently to make answer to the speech of Douglas which we are now reviewing.

Where then, continued Douglas, were the folly and sin of the Kansas-Nebraska Act? Only in repealing an unconstitutional act of Congress which, moreover, had been framed on an unsound principle, and putting in the place of it a constitutional law based on a sound principle. That was not only right, but also plain common sense, said Douglas. Buchanan had been elected upon that 'naked and distinct issue;' the Supreme Court had sustained the principle of popular self-government; and, cried Douglas, 'I am willing to rest the vindication of the measure and my action in connection with it upon that decision and that verdict of the American people. [Immense Applause.]'

The Democratic champion then stated the strongest issue upon which his party was to make the next campaign. That issue was negro equality. Republican leaders said that the Dred Scott decision was 'cruel, inhuman, and infamous, and should not be respected or obeyed.' Why not, asked Douglas? Where was the cruelty, inhumanity, infamy? The Republicans said that it was in the denial to negroes of that equality of all men asserted in the Declaration of Independence; and that it was for the 'perfect and absolute equality of the races' that the battles of the Revolution had been fought. Was that true? asked Douglas. If so, the Republican conclusions must be admitted, and, as honest men, Americans should put into practice the principle of racial equality.

Just what would that mean? The instant emancipation of every slave in the country; the repeal of that clause of the Constitution of Illinois which forbade negroes to come and live among us; the bestowal of suffrage upon them; the right to hold any public office on an equal footing with white men! Nor was

that all. If the Republican interpretation of the Declaration of Independence was correct and the Republican idea of negro equality was sound, then, as 'conscientious and just men' we must 'repeal all laws making any distinction whatever on account of race or color, and authorize negroes to marry white women on an equality with white men! [Immense cheering.]'

Thus and thus only could Republican assaults on the Dred Scott decision be made good, exclaimed Douglas. Again the delighted crowd cheered. If the Republicans denied this, what became of their boasted sincerity? asked the speaker. Where was the morality or intelligence of proclaiming equality of all races and all men, and yet denying the negro the right to vote, to hold office, to 'marry the women of his choice?' — making him industrially free, and yet keeping him in political and social slavery?

Certain Republican States were now taking steps to change their Constitutions and laws so as to wipe out all legal distinctions between black and white, and the Republicans would do the same thing wherever they got the power, he asserted. Was Illinois ready for that? Of course the Republicans would not yet admit their purpose in all parts of the State — at least not until after the next election. Indeed, they would stoutly deny it in central and southern Illinois; yet Republican newspapers, speakers, and lecturers would go on asserting that the Declaration meant that 'the Almighty created a negro equal to a white man' with 'a divine right' to equal privileges, 'and that all human laws in conflict with that divine right must yield and give place to the "higher law."' That showed what the Republicans would do 'as soon as they get the power.'

The audience now being greatly wrought up, Douglas swept triumphantly on.

Did any State abolish slavery during the Revolution? Not one! and not to this day had any State put negroes on an entire equality with the white man, Douglas exclaimed. The signers of the Declaration, when they asserted that all men were born equal, 'referred to the white race alone' — that British subjects in America were the equals of British subjects in England. History taught, and the fact was, that, *at that time*, 'negroes

were regarded as an inferior race, who, in all ages, and in every part of the globe . . . had shown themselves incapable of self-government,' and requiring the protection of those who could control and care for them.

But, said Douglas, that did not mean that negroes should become slaves, or be treated as such; but only that they should have all the rights they could enjoy 'consistent with the welfare of the community where they reside;' and the extent of these rights must be settled by the people of each State and Territory.

That was the principle on which Independence was declared, the Revolution fought, the Federal Government set up; and the rights and privileges of the African race remained as they were when the Constitution was adopted, 'dependent entirely upon the local legislation and policy of the several states where they may be found.' Illinois had no more right to interfere with what other States and Territories did on that or any other domestic subject, than they had to interfere with the internal laws and policy of Illinois.

The founders of the American Nation did not expect or want entire uniformity in the legislation of different States, Douglas insisted. They did not think that either possible or desirable. So some States thought slavery best suited to their conditions, while others thought it unsuited to theirs; 'but all repudiated the doctrine of the equality of the white and black races,' all agreed that the purity of each should be preserved, all were against 'any species of amalgamation, political, social or domestic.'

And no wonder! Look at the state of things in countries where such social and political mixture had been permitted — Mexico, South America, Central America! Amalgamation always brought the superior down to the level of the inferior, never raised the lower race to the plane of the higher. What did the soldiers in the Mexican War see and hear? 'I appeal to each of those gallant young men before me' who fought in Mexico! They saw the degradation, demoralization, disease, and death that came from a mixture of racial blood. The Fathers knew that, too; they did not look upon the negro 'as any kin to them,' and they arranged our social and political institutions so that

the negro should 'never be of kin to their posterity. [Immense applause.]'

But if negroes were to be made the equals of white men at the polls and in public office, 'upon what principle will you deny their equality at the festive board and in the domestic circle?' The Supreme Court had decided that the negro could not be a citizen; the Republican, 'or abolition party,' denounced that decision and incited disobedience to it; so 'let us join issue with them and put ourselves upon the country for trial. [Cheers and applause.]' [1]

The meeting was over, the Democrats were gleeful, the old line Whigs pleased, the Republicans angry and downcast. The dispirited partisans were full of hope, however, for Lincoln would soon make answer to Douglas, expose his 'sophistries,' tear his flimsy arguments to pieces. But the Little Giant had not spoken to Springfield alone; although he did not realize it at the time, he had addressed the Democracy of the Nation, especially that of the North; he had sounded the battle cry of his party for the next conflict.

When he wrote out his speech for publication, the larger Democratic papers everywhere reproduced it in full, and so did some conservative papers; [2] while the party press generally gave extracts from it. All had editorials of approval in successive issues.[3] It was printed in pamphlet form and scattered broadcast. Notwithstanding the emphatic and reiterated assertion that slavery could be kept out of the Territories by police regulations and local legislation, the most radical of Southern journals praised the speech in extravagant terms.[4] So what Douglas had said at Springfield, June 12, 1857, became the Democratic creed — suppression of Mormon outrage with swift and iron hand, maintenance of the Constitution and the laws, above all, the supremacy of the white race.

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 18, 1857. Douglas was 'enthusiastically cheered throughout and at the close three hearty and enthusiastic cheers' were given for him. *Ib.*, June 15, 1857.

[2] For instance *New York Herald*, June 24, 1857. The *Herald* said that the Springfield speech was Douglas's 'bid . . . for the next Presidency.'

[3] 'It has produced a very deep sensation.' *Washington Union*, June 23, 1857.

[4] *Richmond South*, June 20, clipped in *New York Herald*, June 24, 1857.

The Republican press poured out wrath and abuse. Douglas's Springfield speech was 'a bid for the Presidency;' [1] again he had jumped at the crack of the Slave Power's whip; the Dred Scott decision had annihilated his popular sovereignty, yet he pretended that the two were harmonious — the base little trickster! negro equality was a humbug. Amalgamation! Let Douglas look to his masters in the South for that! Personal attacks were made upon him. His character was assailed.

The fact that he afterward wrote out his speech for publication was evidence of fraud [2] — he was merely 'expurgating the real speech;' [3] he had no soul; he was like Catiline; but his power is great — indeed, 'his art, his sophistry, and his power are wonderful;' yet he was a criminal at heart — 'his hands are red with the blood of murdered Free State men.' [4] Every day for a fortnight the *State Journal* attacked him.[5]

The Democratic press replied with equal fury and with scorn. 'Take out the vulgar and ruffian-like epithets,' said the *State Register*, and nothing was left of the abuse of Douglas by the Springfield Republican paper. The Democratic organ implored everybody, even the enemies of Douglas, to read the partisan vilification of him. But such journalism was to be expected. 'Since the formation of this government no party has existed whose press was so utterly unscrupulous, venal, and corrupt as the black republican,' the *State Register* hotly charged.[6]

Thus began that newspaper virulence which, on both sides, sank to scurrility and falsehood during the Lincoln-Douglas debates the following year. Acrimony there had been before,

[1] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 7, 1857. Editorial beginning, 'Mephistopheles is abroad again.'

[2] Springfield Correspondence, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 17, in issue June 19, 1857.

[3] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 20, 1857, editorial; *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 24, 1857, which printed two 'versions' of Douglas's speech. On June 13, 1857, the *State Journal* printed a satirical report of the speech.

[4] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 7, 1857. Editorial.

[5] From June 23 to July 8, the *State Journal* printed a series of long and bitter reviews of Douglas's speech under these titles: 'Motive for Making it;' 'The "Forked Tongue;"' 'Kansas Affairs;' 'The Dred Scott Decision' (two reviews); 'Amalgamation;' 'Custom and History;' 'Polygamy.' One of this series was Lincoln's speech in reply to Douglas, as given below.

[6] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 18, 1857.

misrepresentation and the usual methods of party strife, but nothing like the practices now set on foot.

The Republicans looked forward to Lincoln's reply with exultant faith in their hero. 'Lincoln's speech is to be an answer to the turgid and false one of Mr. Douglas; *it will be an answer*' which his friends would not want to hear, wrote a Springfield correspondent to the *Chicago Tribune*. The Senatorial campaign of next year had begun already, he said, and the Democrats were getting ready to make a desperate fight. Everybody who knew the two men, knew that 'Lincoln is more than Douglas's equal, politically or legally — head or heart — yes, in any relation.' [1] Yes, indeed, Lincoln's coming speech '*will be an answer*,' repeated his partner in a letter to Parker; for 'Lincoln is a gentleman; Douglas is . . . an unscrupulous dog.' [2]

On the night of June 26, 1857, the Hall of Representatives where Douglas had spoken two weeks before, was, perhaps, 'comfortably filled.' [3] It was amazing, said the Democratic organ next day, that after all the Republican 'drumming, coaxing, and wheedling,' the audience was so small — only about one-fifth as many as went to hear Douglas. 'If Mr. Lincoln can no longer draw a crowd, who can?' He was easily the ablest man the Republicans had. 'If there is a republican in the state of Illinois that can cope with Judge Douglas, that man is the honorable A. Lincoln.' It was 'ominous' for the Republicans that so few would turn out to listen to such a man. [4]

A little after half past eight o'clock Lincoln came in with an arm-load of books.[5] He said that he was there partly because 'some of you' had asked him, and partly because he wanted to make some answer to Douglas's speech. He had heard Douglas deliver it and had since read it.

Lincoln was inclined to agree with Douglas about Utah: if

[1] Springfield Correspondence (certainly Herndon), *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 17, in issue June 19, 1857. Italics *Tribune's*.

[2] Herndon to Parker, June 17, 1857. Newton, 119.

[3] Correspondence of *Chicago Tribune* (Herndon's report), in New York *Tribune*, June 27, issue July 6, 1857. The *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 29, said that not more than half the seats were occupied, and many of these by Democrats who wanted to hear what reply Lincoln would make to their champion.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 27, 29, 1857. [5] *Ib.*, June 30.

the people there were in rebellion, 'they ought to be somehow coerced to obedience.' Perhaps Douglas's way was as good as any, but Lincoln was 'not now prepared to admit or deny' it. Still the Republicans could 'fall in with it without taking back anything they have ever said.' Of course, Douglas would have to back down a good deal from his 'much-vaunted doctrine of self-government for the Territories;' but it was plain from the start that 'that doctrine was a mere deceitful pretence for the benefit of slavery.' Whoever could not see that, could not be made to see 'though one should rise from the dead to testify,' argued Lincoln.

Suppressing rebellion in Utah by force was beside the point. The real question was: 'If the people of Utah shall peacefully form a State constitution tolerating polygamy, will the Democracy admit them into the Union?' The Constitution did not forbid it, and 'why is it not a part of the judge's "sacred right of self-government" for that people to have it, or rather to *keep* it, if they choose?' No mention was made of the fact that Douglas had said that, if reports were true, most of the Mormons were unnaturalized aliens and all of them in armed rebellion against the American Government whose authority they denied.

Douglas knew that the Free-State men of Kansas said they would not vote because they were not registered — at least that was asserted in the press, in public speeches and in letters, 'and borne by every mail, and blown by every breeze to the eyes and ears of the world.' Yet Douglas 'just slips along, not seeming to know there is any such question of fact.' If they had a chance to vote they ought to do so, of course, Lincoln admitted; but if only a few Free-State men had a chance to vote, 'they were perfectly right in staying away from the polls in a body.'

'By the way,' remarked Lincoln casually, the Kansas election had taken place since Douglas spoke, and the returns indicated that only about one-sixth of the registered voters had really voted, and that, too, when not more than one-half of the rightful voters had been registered. What a farce the whole thing was — 'the most exquisite farce ever enacted.'

Free-State Democrats! exclaimed Lincoln. 'Allow me to

barely whisper my suspicion that there were no such things in Kansas as "free state Democrats."' If one could be found, said he, 'I suggest that it might be well to catch him, and stuff and preserve his skin, as an interesting specimen of that soon-to-be extinct variety of the genus Democrat.'

Since Douglas had not discussed the merits of the Dred Scott decision, Lincoln would not do so either, he said, 'believing I could no more improve on McLean and Curtis, than he could on Taney.' Douglas had denounced all who questioned the decision as offering violent resistance to it: but who resists it? asked Lincoln. Republicans believed as much as Douglas — perhaps more — that the Supreme Court must be respected and obeyed.

'We think its decisions on Constitutional questions, when fully settled, should control not only the particular cases decided, but the general policy of the country, subject to be disturbed only by amendments of the Constitution. . . . More than this would be revolution. But we think the Dred Scott decision is erroneous. We know that the court that made it has often overruled its own decisions, and we shall do what we can to have it overrule this. We offer no resistance to it.'

Thereupon, Lincoln went deeper into the grave question of the nature of judicial decisions and how far they are binding, if at all, on public officials. If the Dred Scott decision had been unanimous, without partisan bias, 'in accordance with legal public expectation,' in harmony with the practice of the Government from the first, not based on false statements of history; or if the same decision had been made by the Supreme Court many times for many years, 'it then might be, perhaps would be, factious, nay, even revolutionary, not to acquiesce in it as a precedent.'

But, argued Lincoln, when a decision did not have such elements of authority, it was not even 'disrespectful' to deny that it had not 'quite established a settled doctrine for the country.' Yet Douglas had said that such a view was 'awful.'

Hear, then, what General Jackson had said on that point, when he was President! — and Lincoln read with approval Jackson's famous message to Congress in denial of Marshall's

basic opinion in McCulloch *vs.* Maryland:[1] A decision of the Supreme Court did not control 'the co-ordinate authorities of this government;' each department must 'be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution;' every official swears to support the Constitution 'as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others.'

Yet, exclaimed Lincoln triumphantly, he had heard Douglas denounce that decision and applaud General Jackson for disregarding it. Consider that fact, and see how Douglas's 'fierce philippics' against the Republicans now fall upon his own head. In that long and fierce political war, Douglas had fought in the ranks of those whom he to-day called 'the enemies of the Constitution.'

Lincoln quoted from Curtis's opinion that, at the time the Constitution was adopted, negroes were citizens and voters in five States; then read Taney's statement that it was hard to realize now, how negroes were looked upon then, and that the Declaration, if written at this day, would be understood as including 'the whole human family.' But, said Lincoln, the black man was worse off now than he ever had been; his prospects never had 'appeared so hopeless as in the last three or four years.' In two States the negro's right to vote had been taken away, abridged in another, and not extended anywhere, although the number of States had been more than doubled; in many States the very right of emancipation had been denied — even some State Constitutions forbade legislatures to give freedom to slaves; Congress and the Supreme Court had provided for the spread of slavery, whereas in the old days that extension was prohibited by 'common consent;' once the Declaration was 'held sacred by all, and thought to include all;' but now it was 'hawked at and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it.'

Yes, most certainly the negro was now in a bad way, Lincoln insisted — mammon, philosophy, even the theology of the day, all were after him. 'One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors upon him; and now they have him, as it were,

[1] For a summary of Marshall's opinion and Jackson's attack upon it, see *Marshall:* Beveridge, IV, 289–308, 530–2.

bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrence of every key — the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred different and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced to make the impossibility of his escape more complete than it is.' So Taney was wrong in saying that the negro was more highly regarded now than when the Government was founded.

Douglas had 'scorned' opposition and put the Kansas-Nebraska bill through Congress, although the country was 'in a blaze;' he had been 'superseded' for the Presidential nomination; his 'chief aids' in Illinois, Shields and Richardson, had been 'successively tried, convicted, and executed for an offense not their own;' and now Douglas 'sees his own case standing next on the docket for trial' — he was in a desperate plight.

White people had a 'natural disgust' for amalgamation, said Lincoln, and Douglas hoped to help himself by making use of that disgust; in fact it was his chief hope. He clung to it 'as a drowning man to the last plank;' he got hold of it by 'lugging it in from the opposition of the Dred Scott decision;' he pretended that, because the Republicans insisted that the Declaration 'includes *all* men,' they did so only 'because they want to vote, and eat, and sleep, and marry with negroes!' and that otherwise the Republicans were not consistent. Lincoln hotly repudiated the charge.

'Now I protest against the counterfeit logic which concludes that, because I do not want a black woman for a *slave* I must necessarily want her for a *wife*. I need not have her for either. I can just leave her alone.

'In some respects she certainly is not my equal; but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns with her own hands without asking leave of any one else, she is my equal, and the equal of all others.'

The argument of Taney and Douglas, that the authors of the Declaration did not mean to include negroes because they 'did not at once actually place them on an equality with the whites,' was refuted, Lincoln held, 'by the other fact that they did not

at once, or *ever afterwards*,[1] actually place all white people on an equality with one another.' They did intend '*all* men,' but not to declare all men equal *in all respects* — color, size, intellect, 'moral developments, or social capacity' — but equal as to 'certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' Of course, the Fathers did not mean to declare 'the obvious untruth' that everybody actually enjoyed such equality at that time, but merely to announce the principle, 'so that *enforcement* of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

'They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere.'

The phrase 'all men are created equal' was not meant to be a help to us in our war for Independence, said Lincoln, but to be a 'stumbling-block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism.' The Fathers intended that, if tyrants ever should begin their work in America, 'they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack.' That was the purpose of putting into the Declaration the assertion of the equality of birth — that was what it meant.

What a 'wreck — mangled ruin' — Douglas's explanation made of the Declaration! It was silly, too. Only British subjects in America and Great Britain equal! Was this all to whom the Declaration applied? If so, not only negroes, but 'the French, Germans, and other white people of the world are all gone to pot along with the Judge's inferior races!'

Lincoln had thought, he said, that the Declaration 'promised something better than the condition of British subjects,' oppressed as they were. If it did not, then, 'having kicked off the king and lords of Great Britain,' the Declaration gave no promise that 'we should not at once be saddled with a king and lords of

[1] Italics *Journal's*.

our own.' Lincoln became sarcastic. 'I had thought the Declaration contemplated the progressive improvement in the condition of all men everywhere; but no, it merely was adopted' to justify the colonists in throwing off the British yoke! Since that had been done long ago, the Declaration was of no practical use now — 'mere rubbish — old wadding left to rot on the battle field after the victory is won.'

Why celebrate the Fourth of July next week? — 'quite half of you are not even descendants of those who were referred to at that day.' So when the celebration takes place, let the Declaration be read twice, first in 'the old-fashioned way' and then 'with Judge Douglas's version.'

'I appeal to all — to Democrats as well as others — are you really willing that the Declaration shall thus be frittered away? — thus left no more, at most, than an interesting memorial of the dead past? — thus shorn of its vitality and practical value, and left without the *germ* or even the *suggestion* [1] of the individual rights of man in it?'

Lincoln agreed, he said — 'a thousand times agreed' — that there ought not to be 'mixing of blood by the white and black races.' There were enough white women for white men and black women for black men — so let like marry like. But under which system did amalgamation flourish best? Let statistics make answer: more than fifty-six thousand mulattoes in the free States, nearly all of whom came from the slave States, 'ready made up,' and over six times that number in the slave States 'all of home production' — and, moreover, practically all the offspring of 'black *slaves* [1] and white masters,' very few from whites and free negroes.

In States where the negro had been made 'nearest equal to the white,' there was least amalgamation — New Hampshire, for instance, with only one hundred and eighty-four mulattoes and Virginia with nearly eighty thousand, over twenty-three thousand more than in all the free States together. So statistics proved that 'slavery is the greatest source of amalgamation . . . and the degradation of the free blacks.'

The Dred Scott decision showed 'which party most favors

[1] Italics *Journal's*.

amalgamation,' said Lincoln, 'the Republicans or the dear Union-saving Democracy. . . . Could we have had our way, the chances of these black girls [Scott's wife and daughters] ever mixing their blood with that of white people would have been diminished at least to the extent that it could not have been without their consent.' But Douglas was glad to have them adjudged slaves, 'and thus left subject to the forced concubinage of their masters, and liable to become the mothers of mulattoes in spite of themselves.'

Of course, explained Lincoln, he meant this only as an illustration; he did not 'intimate' that the owner of Dred Scott and his family 'or any more than a percentage of masters, generally, are inclined to exercise this particular power which they hold over their female slaves.'

Obviously Lincoln did not know that the Scotts had been emancipated nearly six weeks before he made this speech, although that notable event had been chronicled in the St. Louis newspapers, and many of these were taken and read in Springfield.

The only 'perfect preventive of amalgamation,' Lincoln insisted, was the separation of the races; but since that could not be done at once, 'the next best thing is to *keep* them apart *where* [1] they are not already together.' For instance, if whites and blacks 'never get together in Kansas, they will never mix blood in Kansas.' Lincoln could not assert, he said, that all Republicans were for racial separation, or that the party, as a party, was for it; 'but I can say a very large proportion of its members are for it, and the chief plank in their platform — opposition to the spread of slavery — is most favorable to that separation.'

Colonization of negroes in Africa was the only way to bring it about, declared Lincoln; and he bemoaned the fact that no political party was doing anything for colonization. It was a hard job; 'but "where there is a will there is a way," and what colonization needs most is a hearty will.' When the people should come to see that it was 'morally right' and also to their interest, or, at least, not against it, 'to transfer the African to

[1] Italics *Journal's*.

his native clime, we shall find a way to do it, however great the task may be.'

The Republicans taught that the negro was a man, 'his bondage is cruelly wrong,' and that slavery should not be extended, and thus, Lincoln said, they were creating a sentiment for colonization. But the Democrats 'deny his manhood,' deny or belittle his bondage, crush sympathy for him, 'excite hatred and disgust against him,' call the spread of slavery 'a sacred right of self-government' — and thus discourage colonization.

No wonder! 'The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle; and it will ever be hard to find many men who will send a slave to Liberia, and pay his passage, while they can send him to a new country — Kansas, for instance — and sell him for fifteen hundred dollars.' [1]

With these words Lincoln brought his reply to Douglas to a close. It was a grand speech, said the *State Journal* three days later, 'overwhelming,' unbeatable, Douglas's 'sophistries' were utterly crushed. The *State Register*, on the other hand, was mildly contemptuous; Democrats who heard Lincoln smiled broadly and congratulated one another, it said, while the 'black republicans' looked 'woebegone.' Lincoln had stated that Douglas had spoken to 'controvert' his opinions: let Lincoln subdue his vanity. Douglas never had a thought of Lincoln's views when he made his speech, and 'did not know or care whether Mr. Lincoln had any opinion at all or not.' Lincoln had 'large expectations' of succeeding Douglas as Senator; but, asked the Democratic organ, could 'a single individual,' not wholly a partisan, who had heard the two men, be 'willing to supersede Judge Douglas with Mr. Lincoln?' [2]

Democrats had felt sorry for Lincoln when the Republicans 'shamefully betrayed and cheated him' and elected Trumbull, who was far beneath him in talent; but when they saw Lincoln join 'the small ends of all parties' just to get office, saw his conduct toward Douglas, and heard him argue for negro equality, they and 'all right thinking men' thought him 'contemptible.'

[1] *Works*, II, 315–39. The *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 29, 1857, printed Lincoln's speech in very small type.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, June 30, 1857.

Lincoln did not complain that the Kansas Republicans in their so-called Topeka Constitution forbade free negroes even to come into the State, and yet he assailed the Supreme Court of the United States for deciding that a negro could not be a citizen.

Worse still, Lincoln had said that Douglas 'wanted Dred Scott's daughters kept in slavery so that they might be forced into concubinage. Comment is unnecessary.'[1] It was mere 'idle ranting of insane fanaticism' for Lincoln to say that the Fathers declared 'an universally acknowledged inferior . . . to be their equal,' and yet withheld 'every right and every privilege;' that would prove that 'instead of a band of patriots, they were nothing more nor less than a band of hypocrites.'[2]

Lincoln repudiated amalgamation and yet tried to prove the equality of white and black, went on the Democratic organ. He complained that the negro was worse off now than he ever had been. If so, whose fault was it? That of agitators who had induced slaves to escape and then let them 'starve in freedom,' incited slave uprisings, taught the blacks that murder of masters was 'but an act of justice. . . . The white man, in self defence, was forced to impose restrictions upon the negro.' That state of things was 'wholly attributable to Mr. Lincoln and his associates.' The same men had inculcated hatred of the South.[3]

In short, said the Democratic organ, Lincoln's argument was weak, his stand indefensible. 'The *Journal*, from the time the speech [of Douglas] was delivered has been guilty of telling more infamous and villainous lies than all other black-republican papers combined. . . . From this time forward the *Journal* will have quite enough to do to defend the Hon. A. Lincoln's speech.'[4]

Little further comment on Lincoln's speech was made by the Republican press, and four days after he delivered it, Trumbull went to Springfield and made another, which was acclaimed as 'truly grand and thrilling.' The Dred Scott decision, cried Trumbull, was the 'odious and infamous opinion of a slave

[1] *Illinois State Register*, July 27, 1857.

[2] *Ib.*, July 3, 1857, editorial on 'Hon. A. Lincoln's Speech.' In the same issue the charge was made that there were two versions of Lincoln's speech — 'the proof is at hand.'

[3] *Ib.*, July 2, 1857. [4] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 29, 1857.

driving court' which must be 'wholly and totally revolutionized.' [1] Trumbull's followers thought that his answer to Douglas was much better than that of Lincoln, who, said Koerner, was 'an excellent man, but no match to such impudent Jesuits and Sophists as Douglas.' [2] But Herndon was loyal to the senior partner. 'Douglas's speech was a low, gutter-rabble rousing speech; Lincoln's was gentlemanly, strong, and conclusive,' he assured Parker, to whom he sent Lincoln's best wishes together with his speech.[3] In such fashion were efforts put forth to break the 'lull' which Herndon declared held the people in its somnolent grasp.

So ended the second bout between the two men in the duel, the finish of which we presently shall see. Both had said practically all they had to say, and the most that they ever did say upon racial equality, the Declaration, the Constitution, the Courts. Hereafter, we shall find them putting old arguments on these subjects in new forms; and dealing afresh only with novel situations which, even now, are swiftly approaching. In the final phase of this encounter, we shall find one always on the aggressive, the other on the defensive, parrying thrusts, changing ground, his cautious blade darting home when an opening is found. Such were the characters of the duelists, such had been their methods from the first, such they were to continue to be to the last.

As we have observed while listening to him, Lincoln said nothing at all about Douglas's assertion that slavery could not last anywhere without friendly local legislation and police regulations. And just as he did not in 1854 endorse the charge that the Slave Power procured the repeal of the Missouri Compromise,[4] so now, in 1857, he did not repeat the accusation that the Dred Scott decision was a part of the same plot by that malign influence.

Not until Republican leaders in the Senate next year, as a matter of party strategy, concentrated their attacks on the complicity of the Supreme Court in a crafty scheme to spread slav-

[1] Springfield Correspondence, *Chicago Tribune*, July 2, 1857.

[2] Koerner to Trumbull, July 4, 1857, as quoted by *Era:* Cole, 155.

[3] Herndon to Parker, July 4, 1857. Newton, 122–3. [4] See Chap. v of this volume.

ery over the whole country, did Lincoln take up that indictment. When, at last, he did so, we shall hear him state that charge, albeit indirectly, in simpler and more persuasive fashion than any one else had stated it, or ever was to state it. We shall also hear him finally make use of the theory that Douglas had so long and often advanced, that slavery could not live without local friendly laws.

But just now, having delivered his speech in reply to the man he hoped to overthrow, Lincoln hurried to New York,[1] to make sure of his fee from the Illinois Central Railroad. Upon his return, Lincoln again took up his practice of the law, so often and so long neglected, and secured one employment that added another big fee to his professional receipts for that lucrative year, and was not wholly without advantages in politics.[2] So with law practice improving and with clouds lifting from the skies of his political ambition, Lincoln reached the forty-ninth year of his life.

[1] Herndon to Parker, July 29, 1857. Newton, 123–4.

[2] The Rock Island Bridge case. See, p. 598, Vol. I of this work.

CHAPTER VIII

DEMOCRATIC SPLIT AND REPUBLICAN OPPORTUNITY

I will stand by the American Union as it exists under the Constitution. If standing firmly by my principles, I shall be driven into private life, it is a fate that has no terrors for me. DOUGLAS, in the Senate, March 22, 1858.

Douglas is a brave man. Forget the past and sustain the *righteous*. GREELEY to HERNDON, March, 1858.

A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure, permanently, half *slave* and half *free*. . . . It will become *all* one thing or *all* the other. . . . 'A *living dog* is better than a *dead lion*.' Judge Douglas if not a *dead* lion *for this work* [opposing slavery extension], is at least a *caged* and *toothless* one. LINCOLN, at Illinois Republican State Convention, June 16, 1858.

LINCOLN'S second trip to New York was a race with that financial storm, already under way, which was soon to sweep over the whole land and leave the business structure of the country in ruins. When, with his battered carpet-bag and old bulging umbrella, wearing his ill-fitting clothes and the weather-beaten hat, he took the train at Springfield soon after his reply to Douglas, destructive commercial winds were already high and blowing with ever-increasing and ominous strength. For a long time conditions had been growing worse, and now the weaker timbers of the vast but flimsy edifice of credit, were beginning to break. Indeed, even before his first journey to New York, in March, 1857, a country bank here and there in Illinois, had collapsed.[1] Just before Lincoln again started for New York, the Bank of Commerce at Chicago failed,[2] and other institutions faced closing.

The newspapers, all of which Lincoln so constantly read at the *Journal* office and several of which he took, had made brief note of these bad signs. But Lincoln had better means of knowing what was going on in the world of banking and trade than

[1] Of sixty-one State banks in Illinois, three had failed, and eleven were closing. *Rockford Register*, Feb. 7, 1857. The Bank of Ottawa suspended in March. *Ottawa Free Trader*, March 21, 1857. 'How long are the people to be cheated out of their earnings by these swindling rag mills.' *Aurora Daily Beacon*, April 2, 1857. Two banks in St. Louis decided not to accept the notes of most Illinois banks. *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Jan. 31, 1857.

[2] *Ottawa Free Trader*, July 11, 1857.

the scanty items in the papers. His intimate friend, client, and adviser, Jacob Bunn, kept him well posted. Also, Herndon knew what was taking place. As Bank Commissioner of Illinois, it was the business of the junior partner to gather data on that very matter.[1] The State Auditor, Jesse K. Dubois, too, was as well informed. If satisfaction of Lincoln's judgment against the Illinois Central Railroad Company was not to be long delayed, he must act quickly.

Soon after his return from New York the fee was paid, and, thus equipped with the largest amount of cash he ever received in a lump sum before he became President, Lincoln went forward with his political plans. Of these, the one immediately before him was that of beating Douglas for the Senate next year. But Lincoln's career was now wholly dependent upon the success of the Republican Party, and big events, decisive of its fortunes, came swiftly.

In less than a fortnight after the Railroad Company deposited to Lincoln's credit in his bank at Springfield, the four thousand and eight hundred dollars due him, the general financial crash began with the failure of the largest money-lending concern west of the Alleghanies.[2] Quickly the panic spread over the whole country. By the end of October, nearly every bank in the North and many in the South had suspended.[3] Within two months after they had reluctantly sent Lincoln his money, the harried directors of the Illinois Central Railroad Company were forced to make an assignment, and all payments were stopped, except those for bare operating expenses.

Industry was paralyzed. Farmers could not sell their grain. Factories shut down. Tens of thousands of laborers were thrown out of work. In New York great meetings of the un-

[1] Thomas Quick and Herndon to Trumbull, Oct. 11, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

[2] The Ohio Life and Trust Company of Cincinnati, which closed its doors Aug. 24, 1857. This institution, operating under one of the easily obtained and all-inclusive charters of that day, did little or no insurance business, but, by means of loans, speculated in lands and all sorts of securities, especially railroad stocks. The credit structure of the North was shot through with its operations and deals. *Cincinnati Enquirer* and *New York Herald*, clipped in *Chicago Daily Times*, Aug. 27, 1857.

[3] New York *Tribune*, Sept. 28, Oct. 14, 15, *et seq.*, 1857. Southern banks, however, were in much better condition. *Washington Union*, Sept. 29, 1857; *Lynchburg Virginian*, clipped in *Alexandria Gazette*, Sept. 11, 1857.

employed were harangued by agitators. The doctrine that society must provide the means of livelihood to all who were willing to toil was preached with fury — labor was above capital; the man above the dollar, it was said. Riotous processions marched. Dangerous crowds assembled in the financial district.[1] In other cities, the state of things was almost as bad — everywhere it was threatening. Vast impetus was given to the labor movement, which, as we have seen, had begun to assert itself as a political force in the Frémont campaign of the preceding year, and which Republican leaders had astutely encouraged. They now did so more than ever.

One result of this financial catastrophe was the indefinite postponement of a general Northern disunion convention at Cleveland, Ohio, in October.[2] Nearly seven thousand persons had signed a call for this assemblage,[3] which was to be like that held at Worcester, Massachusetts, in mid-winter, but representative of extreme radical sentiment of the whole North. Thus the Republicans were saved from a sharper embarrassment than that of the New England gathering, and Republican papers now assailed the Northern secession project in unsparing terms — it was as small in numbers as it was treasonable in purpose, they said. This, indeed, was true.[4]

[1] 'Such is the situation of New York at the present moment, her streets filled with proletarian bands, clamoring that the city government shall furnish them with bread or work, or threatening openly to resort to violence and plunder.' *Alexandria Gazette*, Nov. 9, 10, 13, 1857. The number of unemployed in danger of semi-starvation 'is almost inconceivable by those who have means.' New York *Tribune*, Oct. 22, 1857.

From Oct. to Dec., 1857, the New York press gave extended and detailed accounts of the desperate industrial situation and labor demonstrations in that city. Some papers said that conditions were like those preceding the French Revolution.

[2] The announcement, signed by Higginson, Phillips, and Garrison, said that the convention must be postponed because of the 'sudden paralytic shock which has fallen upon the whole country, in regard to its financial and business operations.' *Liberator*, Oct. 23, 1857. The postponement aroused great anger among Northern disunionists, resolutions denouncing those who called off the meeting were passed, and Parker Pillsbury wrote an abusive letter to Garrison. *Ib.*, Nov. 6, 1857.

[3] *Liberator*, Oct. 16, 1857. From Sept. 11, 1857, until it printed the notice that the convention must be put off, the *Liberator* urged that it be largely attended.

[4] When the call for the disunion convention was published in Sept., 1857, the *Chicago Tribune* denounced it in a very long and remarkable editorial: 'Acknowledging for the most part the justness of the complaints of the signers of the call, we are utterly and totally opposed to the . . . remedy . . . they recommend. They are Abolitionists; we are Republicans.' They think slavery the sole evil; we think it 'only one of the *incubi* by which the country is ridden. . . . Had we the power to turn loose, instantaneously, upon

But the panic gave the new party more positive help — the opportunity to assert that a protective tariff was necessary to avert such disasters, and to make that policy a basic feature of the Republican creed, now undergoing revision. Many causes had brought on the catastrophe — inflation of values by the floods of gold poured out from California mines, mad speculation in lands, railways, and other projects, attempts to carry out bloated plans for internal improvements, above all fantastic expansion of uncontrolled issues of currency by hundreds of irresponsible banks. But there had been heavy buying of foreign goods, too, and these importations had created large indebtedness to Europe.

While most economists said that the causes named, and especially the deranged currency, were the chief sources of trouble,[1]

the country, every bondman held in chains, we should not dare to pronounce them free. . . . We believe that he is unfit for the freedom that is our's' and that emancipation, without preparatory training, 'would be a crime in the master and a curse to the slave.' Because of slavery 'they [Abolitionists] hate the Union, and would break it up forever: . . . We love it, and would preserve it, because by its strength and the sacred principles upon which it is based, Slavery by and by will be impossible. . . . The shame of an attempt to overturn the Government . . . ought to have been left to the Nullifiers and fire-eaters of the South and their confederate traitors of the North,' etc. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Sept. 29, 1857.

This was typical of Northern Republican editorials. At Springfield, Lincoln's paper declared: 'The only sympathizers such a convention of traitors have, are among the Southern wing of the . . . bogus Democratic party.' *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Nov. 2, 1857.

Conservative Southern papers were even more severe on the proposed disunion convention. 'We are not *advocates* of *Lynch* law, at any time or place, but — were there no true hearted American citizens in Cleveland, to drive these incendiaries out of their city?' asked the *Alexandria* (Va.) *Gazette*, Oct. 31, 1857, after printing a dispatch of what was done by many delegates who had gone to Cleveland in spite of the postponement of the convention.

[1] *Hunt's Merchants Magazine* for Oct. and Nov., 1857, contains careful articles on the panic, mostly by bankers and business men. One by Daniel R. Hundley of Chicago is on commercial and industrial failures in Illinois and the West, Oct., 1857, XXXVII, 444–5. Before the crash, borrowed money brought from three to five per cent interest per month.

Some Illinois Republican officeholders thought currency inflation the cause: 'It is better for us to know at once the end of all this *Bogus* Banking than to be tampering with a set of Insolvent Banks.' Jesse K. Dubois to Trumbull, Springfield, Oct. 5, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

In general, this was the view taken by the press: 'The great fountain of these causes [stock inflation, land speculation, etc.] is the expansion of the currency.' *New York Herald*, Sept. 28, 1857.

In a long and able editorial, the *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*, Aug. 28, 1857, blamed speculation.

And see *Economic Essays:* Charles Franklin Dunbar, 266–93. Professor Dunbar at-

Seward and the Republican leaders laid the principal blame on the low tariff, and demanded a higher one [1] that would protect American industry and keep our money at home.[2] This was good old Whig doctrine, and, as we shall see, was a strong inducement to old line Whigs to join the new party in spite of its 'sectionalism.' The protective tariff plea was even more persuasive to great numbers of Democrats in the manufacturing States, particularly in Pennsylvania; and largely for this reason, we shall presently see them leave the Democratic Party in shoals and vote the Republican ticket in 1858 and for Lincoln in 1860.

Finally came the split in the Democratic Party. When the panic was at its worst, the Kansas problem was again thrust upon the new Administration. The subject produced upon Buchanan's mind, and, as he thought, upon the minds of most people, the same weary impatience with which the reader of these pages receives renewed mention of it.[3] Yet, since it caused Douglas to break with the President, and thus split his party, we must briefly review that disruption and the causes that produced it. Indeed, but for Douglas's defiance of the Administration and Democratic leaders, it is by no means certain that the debates between him and Lincoln would have been held.

The conflict in Kansas had now become one of parties striving for power and for the political and economic advantages that went with it.[4] The old Free-State Party was now the Republican Party, the old Law and Order Party was now the National Democratic Party. Nobody longer expected to make Kansas a

tributes the panic chiefly to the increase of gold, currency expansion, and railway exploitation.

[1] Greeley in New York *Tribune*, Nov. 5, 1857.

[2] *Chicago Daily Times*, Nov. 11, 1857, editorial on Seward's tariff speech.

[3] 'The Public is tired even *ad nauseam* with the Kansas agitation.' Buchanan to Governor James W. Denver, March 27, 1858. Moore, x, 200–2.

The President had long been disgusted with the subject. 'This Kansas question is one of the most absurd of all the Proteus-like forms which abolition fanaticism has ever assumed to divide and distract the country. And why do I say this? Kansas might enter the Union with a free constitution to-day, and once admitted, no human power known to the Constitution could prevent her establishing slavery tomorrow.' Buchanan's speech at Wheatland, Nov. 6, 1856. *Ib.*, 96–8.

This was the main point Buchanan made for the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution — once a State, Kansas could change her Constitution at any time.

[4] Location of the capital, penitentiary, and other State institutions, control of public

slave State permanently.[1] The majority against it was very great and rapidly increasing. Even Atchison and Stringfellow had given up. In Missouri itself leaders of both parties thought the institution was dying out in that State.[2] Climate alone made it impracticable in Kansas — 'incessant and tremendous winds from the icy Rocky Mountains' swept across the prairies, fuel was scarce.[3]

In this situation a Constitution was framed under which admission of Kansas as a State was sought. This instrument was the famous Lecompton Constitution, so called because the Convention making it met at the Territorial capital. It was wholly the work of the old pro-slavery men, because the Free-State men, or Republicans, had refused to take part in the election of delegates to the Constitutional Convention. The Free-State Party claimed that in half of the counties no census had been taken or registration made, without which electors in

offices and expenditures, establishment of railways and other corporations, the disposal of public lands, and, in general, the advantages and opportunities that go with power over legislation and administration.

A comparative study of acts passed by the 'bogus' Legislature of 1857 and those immediately enacted by the so-called Free-State Legislature of 1858 that speedily succeeded it is instructive. For instance, the incorporators of various railway companies under the first always included only Democratic, and those under the second solely Republican leaders. Laws relating to education, courts, and civil administration were not radically different.

[1] 'We have never thought Kansas would be a slave State.' *Richmond Enquirer*, Feb. 2, 1858.

'It was universally conceded that it could not be made a slave State by a fair vote of the people.' Testimony of Governor Robert J. Walker, Apr. 18, 1860. *Covode Investigation*, 107.

'Nobody thinks of making Kansas a slave State. The only question is shall it be a national democratic or an abolition State.' George A. Crawford, Bement, Ill., to Horatio King, July 13, 1857. King MSS., and in Connelley, *Miss. Vall. Hist. Rev.*, XIII, 541–4. Crawford had just been in Kansas making land investments, and his letter throws light on the economics and political situation there.

[2] Edward Everett, at St. Louis, to Robert C. Winthrop, at Boston, April 11, 1857. Winthrop MSS. 'I have seen Bates, [Senator] Geyer and the leaders of both parties here, and they all agree that slavery will not last long in this State.'

[3] Testimony Gov. Walker, *Covode Investigation*, 116. 'The permanent existence of slavery here [Kansas] is then preposterous; and I never heard but one pro-slavery man in Kansas who did not concede the fact. . . . The number of slaves in Kansas is, probably, about two hundred, it being estimated that two hundred have been taken away since the last severe winter.'

Justice McLean of the Supreme Court told Browning that James L. Orr, of South Carolina, Speaker of the House, 'is in favor of making Kansas a free State.' Browning's *Diary*, I, 294–5.

those counties could not vote. A far stronger reason, however, was the determination of the Republican leaders to preserve the alignment and discipline of their party, which, they argued, would be broken if they recognized in any way the authority of the fraudulent Legislature, which, from the first, they had consistently denounced and fought.[1]

The Democrats made answer that the taking of a census and the registration of voters were forcibly prevented in those very counties from which complaints now came, and in this there was some truth.[2] With more reason they also charged the partisan motive. At an election of a Legislature soon afterward many Free-State men did vote, however, and a heavy Republican majority resulted; but this was overcome by returns from two places where such enormous and open frauds were perpetrated that the new Governor, Robert J. Walker, himself a pro-slavery man, refused certificates to those shown thus to be elected.

Even the small participation of the Free-State men in this election showed that the Republicans vastly outnumbered their opponents in Kansas. It is a mathematical certainty that, had they voted for delegates to the Constitutional Convention, that body would have been almost unanimously Republican, and Kansas made a free State; but the Republicans would have been left without the advantage given them by the political storm we are now to witness.

So although the Constitutional Convention had been almost solidly pro-slavery, a hard fight, lasting for weeks, was made for a full submission of the proposed Constitution to the people. This fight was led by John Calhoun, Lincoln's old friend, employer, and counsellor in the New Salem days, who at Douglas's request had been appointed Surveyor General of the Territory,[3] and for the same reason was kept in that office by the new Governor.[4] Calhoun was an ardent pro-slavery man when in

[1] Some Eastern Republican leaders opposed this course. Senator Wilson of Massachusetts went to Kansas and begged the Republicans to vote. Wilson, II, 537–8.

[2] Speech of Senator Green of Missouri in Senate, March 1, 1858; *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. I, 905.

[3] *Douglas*, Johnson, 327.

[4] Walker's testimony, Apr. 18, 1860, *Covode Investigation*, 111.

the Illinois Legislature with Lincoln, and still held the same views; but when a candidate for the Constitutional Convention, he had promised to favor submission. He now kept his word and made the strongest speech of the Convention to that effect. The fight was lost, however, by a single vote.[1] After another bitter struggle and by a majority of but two votes [2] a compromise was adopted.

By this compromise the single question of slavery or no slavery was to be submitted to the people at an election to be held, December 21, 1857; but on no other part of the proposed Constitution were the people to vote. One clause thus kept from popular consideration provided that the property rights of the few slave-holders already in Kansas should not be taken away by any future legislation of the new State.[3]

Calhoun hesitated to accept the adjustment, but finally agreed and led the fight for it as he had for the 'out-and-out plan.' He did this largely because he thought it would please Douglas.[4] As President of the Convention, Calhoun transmitted the Constitution so modified to Washington, and thus, next to the President, became the main target for the shafts of anti-Lecompton men. For this there was some excuse, since Calhoun sent the document to Buchanan instead of to Congress, as the Convention had directed him to do.

It was over this question of partial submission of the Constitution for approval by the people at the polls that Douglas broke with the President and his party. Douglas insisted that the principle of popular sovereignty required that the people should be given the chance to vote on the whole Constitution and not on the one question of slavery alone; Buchanan and the party leaders felt that submission at that time was not wise as a practical matter, nor required as a matter of law. But

[1] Testimony of H. L. Martin before Covode Committee, May 9, 1860. *Ib.*, 161–3.

[2] *Ib.*, and Buchanan's Kansas Message, Feb. 2, 1858. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 471–81.

[3] For Lecompton Constitution see *Federal and State Constitutions:* Francis Newton Thorpe, II, 1201–20. This volume also contains the Topeka (Free-State) Constitution of 1855 and that of 1859 under which Kansas was admitted into the Union. All these constitutions are much alike, except in the article on slavery in the Lecompton Constitution, and in the provision in the Topeka Free-State Constitution of 1855, that only whites and Indians could vote, thus excluding free negroes.

[4] *Covode Investigation:* 162–70.

when the President had appointed a new Governor for Kansas, Douglas had, in May, 1857, told him on the way to his post, that he would support the then proposed constitution only if he were convinced that it was the will of the people; and he stuck now to what he had said then.[1]

Unless he acted on principle,[2] it is hard to see why Douglas took this grave step. On the sole ground of political expediency the weight of argument was with the President. The Lecompton Constitution was republican in form, as required by the National Constitution, and it had been framed by orderly and regular processes of law; many States had come into the Union without the people voting upon their Constitutions; the slavery question was the only one that had caused trouble, and that subject was to be decided at the polls; above all, once a State, the people could change their fundamental law if they did not like it, and thus there was no quicker way to settle the disturbance than for Congress to accept any Constitution presented.[3]

Such was the reasoning by which the President justified his championship of the Lecompton Constitution. His wish and purpose were to get the irritating subject of Kansas out of the way and prevent a recrudescence of strife and bloodshed in that Territory.[4] Forbidding reports of threatened hostilities there filled the air, and violence seemed likely to break out unless speedy action was taken.[5] If fighting did begin once more, the Nation would again be torn by sectional and partisan conten-

[1] Stevens, 515. [2] *Douglas:* Johnson, 333–5.

[3] Much was made of this point by the Administration press and by Democratic Senators throughout the debate. See especially *Washington Union*, Feb. 3, 1858; and Senator Brown's speech, Feb. 4, 1858. *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. 1, 572–3.

[4] This was the general Democratic and conservative view. 'The Kansas question has given trouble enough to the country; and we heartily hope that the Lecompton Constitution will be received by Congress, and the controversy brought to an end. If the people of Kansas are really dissatisfied with it, let them call a State Convention and remodel their organic laws.' *Richmond Enquirer*, Feb. 2, 1858.

[5] 'Civil war may rage there again with redoubled rancor.' *Ib.*, Feb. 9, 1858.

Governor Walker testified before the Covode Committee, April 18, 1860, that in 1857 the Topeka Party (Republicans) had 8,000 troops armed and drilled. *Covode Investigation*, 107. And see 'Order No. 2, Quartermaster's Department, Kansas Volunteers . . . Lawrence, Oct 19, 1857,' approved by 'J. H. Lane organizer,' in Library of Congress.

Absurd stories were printed about popular uprisings against the U.S. troops in Kansas, and tales about fights between Free-State men and the Border Ruffians were renewed. Kansas Correspondence, New York *Tribune*, Jan. 5, 8, 1858, *et seq.*

tion, and the Republican Party thus be given another access to that source of strength which had created it, and of which it was now so badly in need.[1] From the very beginning, moreover, the Democratic Party had vigorously claimed that the Free-State Party, now Republicans, were lawless and revolutionary and bent upon the overthrow of the regular and legal Government of the Territory. Also the President was convinced that if Kansas was not admitted now she could not be brought into the Union for a long time to come.[2]

The President himself appears to have formed his policy; no evidence has been adduced to support the charge that he yielded to Southern influence, or that that mysterious power was brought to bear upon him. Certainly the South had little to gain as a practical matter, since it was admitted on all hands that Kansas could not be kept a slave State for long.[3] But some Southern men seemed to think it vital to Southern interests that the Territory must come in as such.[4] For years, one free and one slave State had been admitted at about the same time,

[1] Of the large quantity of material on the President's views and his reasons for them, the best statements are those of Buchanan himself, in the Kansas part of his first annual message to Congress, Dec. 8, 1857. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 449–54, and his Kansas Message, Feb. 2, 1858. *Ib.*, 471–81.

[2] Buchanan to Denver, March 27, 1858. Moore, x, 200–2.

[3] A sensible and, for the time, remarkably accurate statement of Buchanan's predicament and Southern influence upon him was made by Chief Justice John Dean Caton of the Supreme Court of Illinois in a friendly letter of rebuke to Trumbull:

'I do not think that he [Buchanan] or any sane man on earth thinks that all the presidents and all the Cabinets and all the Congresses and all the supreme courts and all slaveholders on earth with all the constitutions which could be drawn can ever make Kansas a slave state.

'No there has been no such expectation, and I do not believe desire on the part of the president to make it a slave State; but as he had already been pestered to death with it, he resolved to make it a state as soon as possible, and thus being rid of it, let them fight it out as they liked. He could then cry "Go it husband! Go it bear!!"

'In this mood the southern members of the cabinet and others found him. When news of the constitution being formed came, he committed himself, thinking no doubt that Douglas would be hot for it and that there would be no general opposition in his own party to it.'

Trumbull had written to the Chief Justice that the slave trade would soon be set up in the free States if the Democratic Party stayed in power. Nonsense! retorted Caton; such talk was either stupid or sheer politics. 'Come and spend a while with me and I will make a rational and sober man of you again.' J. D. Caton to Trumbull, Jan. 27, 1858. Trumbull MSS. Caton was a Douglas Democrat.

[4] If not, '*the cause of southern rights is dead.*' Thos. W. Thomas, Elberon, Ga., to Stephens, Jan. 12, 1857. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 392. Italics Thomas's.

and Minnesota was even now knocking at the doors of Congress; California had been 'hurried' in solely because she had a free Constitution and was Kansas now to be kept out solely for the opposite reason? [1] To admit her might give two pro-slavery Senators for the time being at least — such appears to have been the curious reasoning of Southern extremists. Without much practical consideration they seemed to have looked on the matter as one of abstract principle.

To be sure, Southern statesmanship was then looking to the acquisition of Cuba, Mexico, and Central America — an almost traditional American purpose and hope — and expected to extend slavery over those vast regions; but, while the admission of Kansas as a slave State would keep up the custom of joint admission of free and slave States, that fact had little more than academic interest. All the territories then belonging to the United States were sure to become free States, and if the countries to the southward ever were annexed, they were just as sure to go for slavery. Yet many leading Southern men thought that the rejection of the Lecompton Constitution meant that no slave State ever would be admitted even in that tropical domain, and the President thought so too.[2]

But the South was by no means solid for the Lecompton Constitution. Most old line Whigs and Americans of that section were against it and many Democrats, even some leading fire-eaters, demanded that the entire Kansas Constitution, and not merely the slavery clause, should be submitted to the people. Of these Governor Wise of Virginia was as bold and outspoken as Douglas himself.[3] Several Southern papers took the same stand.[4] 'We expect to break into the south and get a number

[1] 'Are we of the South to be made to see California hurried into the Union against all law and all precedent, *because she is a free state*, and Kansas subjected to the rigors of the inquisition, because she *has a chance* of being a slave State?' Lucius Q. C. Lamar, Oxford, Miss., to Cobb, July 17, 1857. *Ib.*, 405–6.

[2] Buchanan to Denver, March 27, 1858. Moore, x, 200–2.

[3] Dec. 30, 1857, Wise wrote an elaborate and characteristic letter to Tammany Hall against the President's plan and for full submission of the Constitution. *Richmond Enquirer*, Jan 12, 1858; *Illinois Daily State Register*, Jan. 16, 1858. But the Legislature of Virginia passed resolutions for the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, and the *Washington Union* printed them in the same issue, Jan. 15, 1858, containing Wise's letter.

[4] *Richmond Enquirer*, Dec. 15, 1857.

of votes,' wrote the most trusted friend of Douglas in the House, when the excitement there was at its height.[1] Indeed, the fight against the Lecompton Constitution was begun by Governor Walker himself, a slave owner, former Senator from Mississippi and, at one time, the ablest and most successful politician in the South.

On the whole, however, leading men of the South insisted that Kansas should come in as a slave State, and, after the battle was joined, spoke out sharply.[2] The words 'principle' and 'justice' appear in all they said. Finally, Southern Legislatures began to pass resolutions looking to secession if the Lecompton plan should be beaten by the North.[3] It would appear that the people of the South, long infected with the idea that that section had often been 'wronged' by the North, became seriously excited. In Mississippi a young man of thirty-two, who, long after the war, was to become a United States Senator and an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, Lucius Q. C. Lamar, was a candidate for Congress. He reported to Cobb that the whole people of his district were aroused.[4]

[1] Thomas L. Harris, Democratic Representative from the Springfield District, Washington, to Lanphier, editor *Illinois State Register*, Jan. 30, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[2] Even in Congress, Southern members regretted that the subject had been thrust upon them. The strongest anti-Lecompton and anti-Administration Democrat in the House, wrote to Lanphier:

'There is a bad state of feeling here [Washington] — worse than in 1850. The southern members most of them are much hurt at the turn things have taken. They are caught, and have been deceived, as have their people.' Harris to Lanphier, Feb. 10, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[3] 'If Kansas is rejected . . . the statute makes it my imperative duty to call the convention which must determine the *status* of Georgia with reference to the Union. . . . When the Union ceases to protect our equal rights, it ceases to have any charms for me.' Joseph E. Brown, Milledgeville, Ga., to Stephens, Feb. 9, 1858. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 431–2.

Cobb, who was for full submission but far more interested in the panic and its effect on 'the money market' than on Kansas ('I am run to the eyebrows'), feared drastic action by his State. 'Gov. Brown and our friends in the legislature ought to be warned not to make *hasty* and *unnecessary* issues.' Cobb, Washington, to Stephens, Oct. 9, 1857. *Ib.*, 424–5.

The Legislatures of Mississippi, Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, California, and Texas demanded the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, and Alabama and Texas favored a Southern Convention if it was rejected; while some months later, Ohio, Michigan, Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, and Vermont, declared against the Lecompton plan. *State Documents on Federal Relations*. Ames, VI, 59–60.

[4] Lamar to Cobb, July 17, 1857. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 405–6. This was not

Buchanan had been 'indifferent' as to the course Kansas might take, 'so it [the decision on slavery] was fairly and honestly made by the people of Kansas, and this was the position of every member of the cabinet.' [1] When the President adopted his program, however, his cabinet to a man supported him on the ground that acceptance of the Lecompton Constitution was the speediest way to dispose of the problem and give the country needed repose.[2] At first, the bulk of his party, North and South, also stood by the President.[3]

Had Douglas done so, too, there is small likelihood that any but Republican resistance would have been made to the President's plan, and it would have been adopted without much difficulty — with far less, at the worst, than had been the case in the fight led by the Little Giant to pass the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Douglas was, indeed, 'the very life and soul of this agitation,' said Senator Albert Gallatin Brown of Mississippi, with mournful bitterness; if he had stood by the President in doing his duty, 'there would not have been a ripple on the surface and we should almost without an effort introduce Kansas into the Union.' [4]

Nor were there signs that any such desperate popular strug-

at all because of objection to submitting the whole constitution to the people, however, but because of Governor Walker's reported 'threat to make such a course a *sine qua non* of admission [of Kansas] as a state into the Union.'

[1] Cobb, Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, to Stephens, June 18, 1857. 'Private.' *Ib.*, 402–3.

John B. Floyd, Va., Secretary of War, was '*for peace*' with Douglas, because he feared reprisals in some departmental affairs. Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, May 8, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

Jacob Thompson, Tennessee, Secretary of the Interior, strongly favored full submission, and he accepted the Lecompton compromise only when convinced that it was the best that could be obtained. Testimony of H. C. Martin, May 9, 1860, *Covode Investigation*, 165–8.

[2] Letters of members of Buchanan's Cabinet to Philadelphia Buchanan Committee, Dec., 1857. *New York Herald*, Dec. 31, 1857.

[3] The *Washington Union* (Administration organ), Nov. 21, 1857, *et seq.*, printed editorials in support of the President's Lecompton policy from Democratic papers all over the North, for instance: the *Pennsylvanian; New Haven* (Conn.) *Register; Brooklyn* (N.Y.) *Daily News; Providence* (R.I.) *Daily Post; New Lisbon* (Ohio) *Patriot; Trenton* (N.J.) *True American; Chillicothe* (Ohio) *Advertiser; Boston Ledger; Bridgeport* (Conn.) *Farmer; Philadelphia Argus; Lawrence* (Mass.) *Sentinel; Dubuque* (Ia.) *Northwest; Paterson* (N.J.) *Register; Maine Free Press; Rockland* (Me.) *Democrat; Salem* (Mass.) *Advocate, Buffalo* (N.Y.) *Republic, et omnes.* But the *Chicago Times*, Nov. 20, 1857, printed the names of as many Northern papers which had come out against the Lecompton plan.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. 1, 573. Feb. 4, 1858.

gle would ensue as that which had been waged by Douglas in the two preceding campaigns. On the contrary, Democratic prospects were bright. That party had just carried Wisconsin, and in town elections even in New England there had been heavy Democratic gains. If Douglas had fallen into line, he would have been at the head of a united and militant party of which he was the ablest member and the outstanding leader. Up to this moment, he had been the strictest disciplinarian in the Democratic organization.

But Douglas decided to take the other course and make war upon the program of the President and his party. Thus he became what is now called a party insurgent, the first great party insurgent in our history since John Randolph of Roanoke. And he well knew the political peril he was thus bringing upon himself.[1] The same thing has been done many times since with smaller excuse, and the retaliation by the President and party leaders, which we are now to witness, was not unlike that so often visited upon party dissenters. Indeed, the fight made upon Douglas presently developed the basic issue of freedom of judgment and action within the party by party members of Congress, as against their submission to any policy of a party President supported by the majority of party leaders and made a test of party fealty. Douglas also made mention of other projects, the Pacific Railroad, for instance, and asked whether no independent opinion was to be permitted on that vital subject? Of the party dissension thus created Lincoln, as a resourceful politician, is presently to take full advantage.

In making estimate of the causes that led Buchanan and Douglas to take a mutually hostile stand, it is not only fair but necessary to consider the state of mind of each man at that particular time. The mental attitude, even the physical condition of men in important stations, can never be left out of account in any just portrayal of what they did and why they did it.

The President was now nearly sixty-eight years of age. He had been brought up in the school of party autocracy. His first training in party leadership and regularity was under

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 335.

Jackson, who brooked no opposition, and he tried to imitate the methods of that party despot. As Chief Magistrate of the Nation, and, officially, the head of his party, he honestly and firmly believed that it was his duty to formulate party policies and exact — compel, if need be — party support of them. Moreover, he was an excellent lawyer, a public man of longer and wider experience than any living personage, except Cass; and he thought himself to be, and up to the very hour of his support of the Lecompton Constitution was considered by most people to be, a statesman. Buchanan's dearest wish was to dispose of the Kansas question forever, so that his Administration could attend to the tangle of situations, foreign and domestic, that pressed upon it, and the President expected and demanded the support of his party.

Douglas was almost a quarter of a century younger than Buchanan and, for the moment, in better health than he had been for a long time. He was master of his party in Illinois and his personal hold on Democrats everywhere, particularly in the North, was far stronger than that of any other man. Persuasive, magnetic, dominant, commanding, he was by nature a dictator. 'Here indeed was a lion, by the very look of him master of himself and of others,' wrote the wife of a member of the House who was opposing Douglas.[1] If any one was to lay down the law to his party, Douglas would do it himself, and he felt that he had earned the right to do it. Certainly he would not submit to dictation from a man with smaller personal influence than he himself had long exercised, especially dictation as to a policy which he had created and of which he considered himself to be the peculiar interpreter and champion. Moreover, it was the exertions of Douglas and they alone that had secured the electoral vote of Illinois for the Democratic candidate for President, had largely produced the same result in Indiana, and had helped mightily to bring about party victory in Pennsylvania.

'By G—d, sir, I made Mr. James Buchanan, and by G—d,

[1] *Reminiscences of Peace and War:* Mrs. Roger A. Pryor of Virginia, 66–7. Mrs. Pryor declares that Douglas was the 'most interesting, picturesque, and prominent' man in Washington.

sir, I will unmake him!' Douglas exclaimed in Chicago,[1] when, before Congress met, the President was reported as favoring the Lecompton Constitution and as inclining to make it a party policy and support of it a test of party fealty.

With a record of desperate political battles such as few men had fought in this country, and of an unbroken series of political victories such as few had won, Douglas had just achieved another triumph greater than any or all his successes in politics. A few weeks after Buchanan's election, the Illinois Senator had married the acknowledged belle of Washington. She was the famous Adele Cutts, tradition of whose beauty and charm is warm and vivid in the Nation's capital even to this day.[2]

During her reign many descriptions of her were written by all kinds of people, men and women, old and young; and in every one of them emphatic comment is made in extravagant words on her loveliness, bright intelligence, gentle manners,

[1] Charles H. Ray (editor *Chicago Press and Tribune*) to Trumbull, Chicago, Nov. 24, [1857]. Trumbull MSS. Douglas was quite open in saying in Chicago, that the entire Constitution of Kansas must be submitted to the people. O. M. Hatch to Trumbull, Springfield, Nov. 23, 1857. *Ib.*

[2] Douglas and Miss Cutts were married Nov. 20, 1856, by Father J. B. Byrne in the Roman Catholic Church at Washington, to which denomination she belonged. She had several bridesmaids, but Douglas 'being a widower, went alone.' Only Shields, Senator Slidell, and two or three other of Douglas's friends were present. *New York Evening Post* and *New York Mirror* of Nov. 21, 1856, clipped in *Chicago Journal*, Nov. 24, 1856.

Describing the bride, the *Post* correspondent said: 'Miss Cutts is tall, elegantly formed, with a sweet, oval face, large brown eyes, small Grecian forehead, around which are entwined the heavy braids of her glossy and abundant chestnut hair. On her clear, peachy complexion, there is a perpetual war of the roses — the red and the white — each failing to maintain sole supremacy.'

Her father was J. Madison Cutts, a nephew of Dolly Madison, who, for many years had been an official under the Second Comptroller of the Treasury, and was reputed to be an able, hard-working man but without political backing. Adele was much like her great aunt, was well educated and had 'more good strong common sense than any belle I ever knew.' Washington Correspondence, *New York Herald*, Nov. 19, in issue Nov. 21, 1856, which, under the caption, 'The Fiancée of Senator Douglas,' continues:

'The approaching marriage of Mr. Douglas with Miss Cutts is now the absorbing theme of conversation in fashionable and political circles. This lady is . . . a representative of the great Madison family and brings to Mr. Douglas the sympathies and social influences of her friends.'

The honeymoon was spent in Philadelphia, New York, and other cities. 'He is enjoying himself in the two-fold capacity of a happy bridegroom and a rejoicing democrat.' *Ib.*, Nov. 26, 1856.

The *Pennsylvanian*, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, Nov. 29, 1856, said: 'This wedding is an affair of unusual interest and excites the warmest wishes of a large circle of friends throughout the entire nation.'

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kindness of heart.[1] Of especial interest is the fact that no woman appears to have been envious or even critical of her — all were her steadfast friends. Men were at her feet and she could have married whomever she pleased.

But when Adele Cutts was twenty-four years old, she became the wife of a man nearly twenty years her senior, and a widower with two children. Stranger still, since the death of his first wife, four years earlier, Douglas had become negligent of dress, reckless in habits, and had shunned fashionable society; yet he won the most attractive woman in Washington.

At once Douglas's house became the social and also political centre of the capital, more so even than the White House, notwithstanding the fact that Harriet Lane, Buchanan's niece, presided there.[2] Not long after the adjournment of Congress, Mrs. Douglas went with her husband to Chicago, and captivated that city, much to the disgust of the Republican State Chairman.[3] Even greater was her triumph at Springfield, on their visit to the State capital when Douglas made his speech there in June, 1857. Thus he was at the very summit of his amazing career, the undefeated champion in every field.

Such was the state of things and such the frame of mind of the two men at the time the break between Douglas and Buchanan came. When he returned to Washington for the fateful session of Congress of 1857–58,[4] Douglas's purpose was

[1] For example: 'Beautiful as a pearl, sunny-tempered, unselfish, warm-hearted, sincere.' Pryor, 69.

[2] 'Douglas had the grandest *fête* last night ever seen in Washington. Upwards of two thousand guests thronged from eight till four in the morning his extensive and elegant mansion. It was filled from basement to attic, and comforts and refreshments, wit, beauty, gallantry, and good feeling were seen everywhere.' A reception by the Secretary of State the same night was 'a most beggarly affair,' compared with that of Douglas. Thomas L. Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, Jan. 20 [1857]. Lanphier MSS.

'The House of Judge Douglas is as much frequented as the White House. Visitors from all parts of the country are anxious to get an introduction to the great champion of popular sovereignty.' Washington Correspondence, *Illinois Daily State Register*, March 15, 1858.

[3] Judd to Trumbull, Chicago, May 12, 1858, Trumbull MSS., telling of Senator and Mrs. Douglas's arrival and a party in their honor which Judd, though half sick, meant to attend just to see the 'flunking' — 'I'll be a thorn in their side if they do.'

[4] The editor of the *Chicago Journal* (Republican), Charles L. Wilson, wrote to Trumbull that Douglas was leaving Chicago for Washington to take up the fight against the Lecompton Constitution, and Wilson urged Trumbull to 'anticipate' him. Wilson to Trumbull, Nov. 26, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

The editor of the *Tribune*, Charles H. Ray, and the Republican State Chairman,

fixed. He made a call upon the President in order to discuss the situation. They could not agree. Both were determined, both dogmatic. At the end, Buchanan rose and, towering above Douglas, said with stern dignity:

'Mr. Douglas, I desire you to remember that no Democrat ever yet differed with an administration of his own choice without being crushed. Beware of the fate of Talmadge and Rives' — two men whom Jackson had broken for party insurgency.

'Mr. President,' Douglas answered in his deep, impressive voice, 'I wish you to remember that General Jackson is dead.' [1]

Head erect and eyes flashing, Douglas stalked out of the White House and the fight was on.[2] 'The Battle will soon begin,' Douglas informed his confidential friend, the editor of the party organ at Springfield. 'We will nail our colors to the mast and Defend the right of the people to govern themselves against all assaults from all quarters. . . . Keep the Ball rolling, and the Party united. It will be all right in the end.' [3]

The attack of Douglas was swift and bold. Seward, Wilson, and all Republicans in Senate and House cheered him on. The Republican press of the East was almost solid in its praise of the great Democrat. Greeley went to Washington, and 'scrabbling down Pennsylvania Avenue' looking 'like a Methodist exhorter from the interior of Vermont' [4] with his flapping white coat, broad-brimmed white hat, and fringe of gray hair, hurried to the Capitol to offer his counsel and encouragement to the man he had so long vilified.

Douglas's party friends in the Senate begged him to wait until after the voting upon the Constitution in Kansas, now only a few days off — perhaps the people would then reject the

Norman B. Judd, also insisted that Trumbull should take the lead. Judd to Trumbull, Dec. 1, 1857. So did the Republican Secretary of State and State Auditor, Hatch and Dubois, writing Trumbull at the same time, obviously in concert with the Chicago editors and State Chairman.

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 328; Stevens, 519.

[2] 'I have seen Douglas twice. He is against us. . . . He looks upon the [Lecompton Constitution] as a trick, etc. His course, I fear, will do us damage. The Administration say they will be firm. He and they will come into open hostility, I fear.' Stephens to his brother, Washington, Dec. 4, 1857. Johnston and Browne, 327.

[3] Douglas, Washington, to Lanphier, Dec. 6, 1857. 'Confidential.' Lanphier MSS.

[4] Washington Correspondence, *Chicago Daily Times*, Feb. 28, in issue March 4, 1858.

slavery clause. He refused — voting on that one point alone was not voting on the whole instrument, the remainder of which, under the Lecompton plan, must be accepted whether the people wanted it or not. Who was James Buchanan, who were Democratic Senators, who was anybody to tell him what the principle of local self-government meant, or what was his duty as a party man? With spirit and hauteur, he declined to placate his foes.[1]

'I have taken a through ticket, and checked all my baggage,' Douglas told the President in another interview, when Buchanan again asked him whether he realized where he was going.[2]

None but lurid adjectives can describe the anger of most Democratic Senators. Those from the North were even more wrathful than those from the South. Douglas carried with him only three, two of them young men [3] and even one of these was faint of heart and went back to the party fold.[4] No matter — Douglas had started and would go through to the end. Washington hummed with excited talk. No such sensation had taken place in years.

When on December 9, 1857, the very day after the President's annual message had been read, Douglas rose in the Senate to make his attack, floor, aisles, galleries, and corridors were crowded. The scene was like that when Webster made his Seventh of March Speech nearly eight years before. Everybody in Washington had learned that the great Democratic leader from Illinois would challenge the Administration and its supporters, and everybody was there to see and hear him do it.[5] In the front row of the Senate gallery were Mrs. Douglas and her mother.[6]

[1] *Douglas:* Johnson, 334. [2] *Recollections of a Busy Life:* Horace Greeley, 356.

[3] Senator David Colbreth Broderick of California, thirty-nine years old; Senator George Ellis Pugh of Ohio, thirty-five years old; and Senator Charles E. Stuart of Michigan, forty-seven years old.

[4] Pugh.

[5] *Trumbull:* White, 77; Sheahan, 320.

'There never was such anxiety to see Douglas before. The president is on thorns. . . . Douglas will make the greatest effort of his life in opposition to the juggle.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, Dec. 3, 1857. Lanphier MSS.

[6] *Baltimore Republican,* in *Chicago Daily Times,* Dec. 16, 1857. This issue also gives editorials from many papers laudatory of Douglas's speech.

Douglas was in fine form, and spoke with unwonted moderation of manner. His argument was an exposition of the principle of popular sovereignty, made with that lucidity characteristic of all his speeches — the fundamental right of the people to pass upon the entire Constitution, 'each and every clause of it.' Yet by the Lecompton scheme, the people had to vote *for* it, no matter how they might vote on the slavery clause. For the 'Constitution with slavery or constitution with no slavery' — those were the only ballots that could be cast! It was, said Douglas, like Napoleon's idea of a fair and free election of himself as First Consul, as described by his enemies: 'Now my soldiers, you are to go to the election and vote freely, just as you please. If you vote for Napoleon, all is well; vote against him, and you are to be instantly shot.'

Douglas, himself, did not like some parts of the Constitution, he said, but if the people wanted them, that was their affair, not his. The people had the right to vote for or against them, as well as for or against slavery. Why except that subject only? 'You have no more right to force a free-State constitution on Kansas than a slave-State constitution. . . . It is none of my business which way the slavery clause is decided. I care not whether it be voted down or voted up. . . . I take it for granted that it will be voted out.' [1]

Angry and sullen, the Democratic Senators sat glowering. But the Democracy of the Northwest responded to the Douglas call; great public meetings were held in approval of his stand.[2] The Indiana Democratic State Convention, controlled by the Indiana Administration Senators and the State machine, and influenced by a young orator of great power, Daniel W. Voorhees of Terre Haute, was about to declare against Douglas, but swung to him amid tumultuous scenes when another young Democrat, Lew Wallace of Montgomery County, offered a Douglas resolution and supported it in a fiery speech.[3]

Twelve days after Douglas hurled his defiance the Kansas

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. 1, 14–8.

[2] Stevens, 526, *Chicago Times*, Jan. 5, 1858.

[3] *Chicago Daily Times*, Jan. 10, 12, 13, 1858; *Illinois Daily State Register*, Jan. 13, 1858.

election on the Lecompton Constitution was held.[1] Again the Free-State Party, as such, refused to vote and in some places forcibly kept pro-slavery men from the ballot-box.[2] So a comparatively small vote was polled, but it was, of course, almost a unit for slavery.[3] Yet a fortnight later,[4] the Republicans changed their tactics and voted solidly at an election for Legislative and other offices under the very Constitution they had refused to recognize, and an overwhelming Republican majority of the Legislature [5] was chosen in spite of heavy frauds, and went into office without any trouble or dispute.

At this election, too, the Republicans voted on the Lecompton Constitution, without authority of law, and rejected it by more than ten thousand majority, pro-slavery men almost unanimously refusing to vote, of course.[6] 'We are now rid of *open* interference from the Democratic party of this territory,' a Kansas Republican manager reported to Senator Hale in Washington. 'We have virtually settled the issue *here* between slavery and freedom, but the last Election against the Constitution and for State officers has given us the entire control.' [7] Practical and wily men were the politicians of Kansas on both sides.

In such fashion did partisan manœuvres on both sides render the politics of the time 'unintelligible,' as George Ticknor of Boston expressed it to an English friend.[8] As soon as the Lecompton Constitution thus became a slavery instrument, John Calhoun, as President of the Constitutional Convention, sent

[1] Dec. 21, 1857.

[2] Leavenworth Correspondence, *New York Herald*, Dec. 21, 1857, in issue Jan. 4, 1858.

[3] 6143 to 589. [4] Jan. 4, 1858.

[5] House, twenty-nine to fifteen; Senate, thirteen to six.

[6] See *Reminiscences of Gov. Robert J. Walker:* Geo. W. Brown, 143–5.

[7] J. W. Robinson, Manhattan, Riley Co., Kansas to John P. Hale, Feb. 5, 1858. Hale MSS. N.H. Hist. Socy., Concord, N.H. This vitally important letter reveals political conditions in Kansas and the purely political devices of both parties.

[8] Ticknor, Boston, to Sir Charles Lyell, Feb. 19, 1858. *Ticknor:* Curtis, II, 407–8. 'Our politics are in a state of great confusion. . . . The reason is that the old parties are breaking up and the new ones are not sufficiently formed to be intelligible. The great contest, as you know, is about Kansas. Buchanan has behaved as badly as possible about it; the leaders of the Free Soil party no better. Both have treated it as a game for political power. It has been just as certain for nearly two years, as it is now admitted to be by everybody, that Kansas will be a free state; and yet, as each party has believed that it could profit more by contest than its adversary could, the contest has been continued. Either party could have stopped it at any time during the last two years.'

it to Buchanan. Promptly the President transmitted it to Congress together with his famous Kansas message, giving the arguments already stated.[1]

All knew, of course, what the Kansas message would be. Although ill, Douglas prepared for renewed war. 'When the message comes, hold your breath. Douglas will shake the capitol and the country,' the devoted Harris advised Lanphier.[2] The Republican press of the East, led by Greeley, lauded Douglas.[3] 'Had the administration followed the lead of Douglas and Walker, the republican organization would have broken to pieces at once,' declared the cautious *Springfield* (Mass.) *Republican*.[4] Thus the struggle was precipitated beyond recall. The President and the party must fight or yield. They fought. Only those who have seen the strange malignity of party hatred in such cases, can realize the violence of abuse with which Douglas was lashed.

The organ of the Administration, the *Washington Union*, now run by the Public Printer, Cornelius Wendell, one of the most corrupt men in political history, read Douglas out of the party, and that paper continued to berate him throughout his campaign for the Senate, which we are now to review.[5] The President treated him as a party rebel and used the club of patronage to beat him down. All over Illinois and in Washington, Douglas men in office were discharged and Buchanan men

[1] Special Message, Feb. 2, 1858. *Messages:* Richardson, v, 471–81.

The President gave a succinct account of Kansas troubles, laid great emphasis upon the fact that 'the speedy admission of Kansas . . . would restore peace and quiet to the country,' and that the people of Kansas could change the Constitution at once, if they did not like it. Buchanan's appeal was not without pathos:

'I have thus performed my duty on this important question, under a deep sense of responsibility to God and my country. My public life will terminate within a brief period, and I have no other object of earthly ambition than to leave my country in a peaceful and prosperous condition and to live in the affections and respect of my countrymen.' *Ib.*, 481.

But speaking as a lawyer only, and with utter lack of the politician's skill, and perhaps to reassure the restless South, the President made use of a sentence that became a very dagger in the hands of his enemies: 'Kansas is therefore at this moment as much a slave state as Georgia or South Carolina.' *Ib.*, 479.

[2] Washington, Jan. 30, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[3] Long editorials New York *Tribune*, Dec. 21, 23, 1857.

[4] Dec. 10, 1857. Editorial, and also Douglas's speech in full.

[5] Dec. 23, 1857, full page editorial.

— regular Democrats — appointed to their places.[1] Democratic leaders, ambitious for the Presidency and eager to get Douglas out of the way, sided with the Administration. Throughout the country, Democratic newspapers that had been well-nigh Douglas organs turned against him. 'Kill him off,' exclaimed the *Indianapolis Sentinel*.[2]

But not for a moment did Douglas quail. Neither a long illness[3] nor that of his wife, who came near dying,[4] shook him. He rose from his sick-bed to close the debate. Although his voice was so feeble that at times he could scarcely be heard, he spoke for three hours at night, clear, firm, defiant to the last. The Senate Chamber, galleries, and all approaches were so jammed that men fought to get near, and correspondents could not reach the places assigned to the press.

'Neither the frowns of power nor the influences of patronage will change my action, or drive me from my principles,' said Douglas solemnly and with all the strength he could muster. 'I prefer private life, preserving my own self-respect and manhood, to abject and servile submission to executive will.'[5] Exhausted, he sank into his chair. His repeated declaration of independence angered his party associates and the Administration more than ever; but it had a tremendous effect upon Republicans of the East.[6]

[1] Herndon to Parker, Feb. 20, 1858; Newton, 141–3.

[2] In *Chicago Daily Times*, Jan. 6, 1858.

[3] 'Douglas is sick, quite so, but say nothing of it. He is a little better today. Jeff Davis is used up for the session.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, March 13, and 11, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

Davis was 'confined to a darkened room with serious inflammation of the eyes. He will not be out for two months at least,' and could not take part in the Lecompton debate. Washington Correspondence, *Illinois Daily State Register*, March 15, 1858.

[4] 'A cloud has hung over the society of the Capital . . . on account of the illness of Mrs. Senator Douglas, who is one of its chief ornaments. . . . It was even rumored that the death-angel had a second time visited the Illinois Senator's mansion and withdrawn HER who had just emerged into the light of her new and distinguished career, and proved herself so worthy of it by triumphs oft repeated and dazzling. . . . The society of the Capital could ill afford to dispense with her, its bright particular star. . . . The sudden and dangerous illness of Senator Douglas' lady has shown what a hold she has upon the hearts of the brilliant circle, in which she moves here like a Queen. The regret and anxiety on her account has been universal.' Washington Correspondence, *Chicago Daily Times*, Feb. 15, in issue Feb. 23, 1858.

[5] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 201, March 22, 1858.

[6] Newton, 152. A summary of this remarkable speech was published, and the dra-

Non-partisan and conservative papers of the North, however, took Buchanan's side. As a practical matter the Lecompton Constitution amounted to nothing, they said, and the admission of Kansas under it would end the trouble, since the Free-State men could and would immediately change it.[1] War was likely to break out again in Kansas, for Lane was once more on the scene; the only way out was for Congress to admit Kansas without delay.[2] Settle the matter and give the country peace.

The telegraph carried to Springfield and all over Illinois the news of every incident in the progress of the fight. Republicans rejoiced.[3] The junior partner was gleeful. This was the end of Douglas, Herndon wrote to Theodore Parker. The war between them is fierce, fiery, full of hate. 'The Buchanan faction here will kill him for the Senatorial seat.'[4] Splendid! answered the radical Boston preacher in a very long letter about the plans and motives of Douglas; he was the 'bloodhound of the South,' but was now 'biting our enemies;' let them fight it out! 'Dog eat dog . . . bite 'em, take hold on 'em, stibboy!'[5]

Judd, Chairman of the Republican State Committee, hurried to Washington and on his return conferred with Lincoln in Chicago. The President would soon organize Illinois democracy against the insurgent. 'Douglas is dead,' he reported, and 'knows he is lost'[6] — so dead, indeed, 'that even the Republicans cannot save him.'[7] Friends of Douglas whom Herndon saw, 'curse strongly — and "drink heap whiskey,"' he informed Parker. Good! Let 'the devils "chaw" the bitter cud.'[8] The Republican press and all good party men egged on the warring Democratic factions — 'we want to make it [the split] wider and deeper — hotter and more impassable.'[9]

matic scenes of the night described, in the New York *Tribune*, March 24, 1858, and in most Eastern papers, and in sections by the *Illinois Daily State Register*, April 14, 15, 16, 1858.

[1] *New York Herald*, Jan. 2, 1858, *et seq.* [2] New York *Times*, Dec. 15, 1857.

[3] W. H. Gardner, Lee Center, Ill., Dec. 24, 1857, to Trumbull. Trumbull MSS.

[4] Herndon to Parker, Dec. 19, 1857. Newton, 133–4.

[5] Parker to Herndon, Dec. 31, 1857. *Ib.*, 137–9.

[6] Herndon to Parker, Feb. 20, 1858. *Ib.*, 143, quoting Judd.

[7] *Ottawa Weekly Republican*, March 8, 1858.

[8] Herndon to Parker, Feb. 20, 1858. Newton, 143.

[9] Herndon to Trumbull, Springfield, Feb. 19, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

But doubts soon began to subdue this cheery mood. Lincoln never had been so sanguine as his buoyant partner. 'Nearly all the Democrats here stick to Douglas,' he wrote to Trumbull a few days after Douglas's first speech; 'but they are hobbling along with the idea that there is no split between him and Buchanan.' Won't Trumbull give Lincoln his views? [1] How Lincoln did hang on, sneered a Democratic organ: 'Hon. Abe Lincoln is undoubtedly the most unfortunate politician that has ever attempted to rise in Illinois. In everything he undertakes, politically, he seems doomed to failure. He has been prostrated often enough in his political schemes to have crushed the life out of any ordinary man.' [2]

Praise of Douglas by the Eastern Republican press annoyed Lincoln. 'What does the "New York Tribune" mean by its constant eulogising, and admiring, and magnifying Douglas?' Lincoln asked Trumbull in a letter written when Lincoln was on the circuit. 'Does it, in this, speak the sentiments of the Republicans at Washington? Have they concluded that the Republican cause, generally, can be best prompted [promoted] by sacrificing us here in Illinois? If so we would like to know it soon; it will save us a great deal of labor to surrender at once. As yet I have heard of no Republican here going over to Douglas; but if the "*Tribune*" continues to din his praises into the ears of its five or ten thousand Republican readers in Illinois, it is more than can be hoped that all will stand firm. I am not complaining — I only wish a fair understanding. Please write me at Springfield.' [3]

There was reason for Lincoln's gloomy forebodings. Republican leaders in the Senate were strong for Douglas. Henry Wilson was sure that he would even join the new party, 'and he is today of more weight to our cause than any other ten men in the country.' The Massachusetts Senator reported that in a long talk with several Republican Senators and Representatives, Douglas had said: 'We must grind this administration to powder.' 'Don't fear him,' wrote Wilson. 'He will sink the

[1] Lincoln to Trumbull, Dec. 18, 1857. Tracy, 83.

[2] *Our Constitution*, July 4, 1857.

[3] Lincoln to Trumbull, Bloomington, Ill., Dec. 28, 1857. Tracy, 83–4.

Democratic party.'[1] Greeley was clear and positive that Douglas had earned Republican support on merit and that sound party strategy required that it be given him; and the great editor never changed his mind.[2]

Herndon, however, could see nothing except disaster for Douglas;[3] but so strong ran the Administration current, that even the junior partner's rejoicing was soon checked. 'Desertions are too fast and quick from Douglas to Buchanan to do us much good,' he reported to Trumbull. It was so all through Central Illinois, he wrote, where old line Whigs who were against Frémont in 1856, were now flocking to the President and were '*hot*' against Douglas.[4] We shall presently see many of these Buchanan Democrats and Whigs vote the Republican ticket to make sure of beating Douglas.

The attitude of national Republican leaders and the party press of the East enraged Illinois Republicans. Douglas's stand was a mere trick they said — his reëlection was just ahead and his insurgency was only a measure to get votes next year; he

[1] Wilson to Parker, Feb. 28, 1858. Newton, 148.

[2] 'I still [1868] abide in that conviction.' Greeley, 357–8. Greeley adds that the Illinois Republicans said that Lincoln must be made Senator now because he had been beaten for that office before.

[3] Herndon to Parker, March 4, 1858. Newton, 150. Democratic leaders in Illinois 'are going over to Buchanan "thick and fast."'

[4] Herndon to Trumbull, Springfield, Feb. 27, 1858. Trumbull MSS. Nevertheless, Herndon said that 'we are quite enthusiastic here just now, and . . . the so-called [Douglas] democracy are down in the mouth.' *Ib.*, and same to same, Feb. 16, 1858.

'Douglas is certainly not gaining in this State. I have never yet seen *one* Republican who has gone to him.' Wm. H. Bissell (Gov. Ill.), Springfield, to Trumbull, Jan. 9, 1858. *Ib.*

'The Democrats have taken the Administration chute almost to a man. . . . We [Republicans] are all awake and all working thus early for some good Republican for the Senatorship.' John T. Knox, Pleasant Plains, Sangamon Co., Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 4, 1858. *Ib.*

'Our Douglas men are all badly down in the mouth. . . . Things are working finely for us in the next campaign.' Jeff. L. Dugger, Atlanta, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 28, 1858. *Ib.*

Douglas's friends were 'most terribly disappointed.' O. M. Hatch (Republican Secretary of State), Springfield, Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 6, 1858. *Ib.*

'I hear daily of men who are coming out for Buchanan and against Douglas — let a few removals be made and Lecompton anti-Douglas men will spring up like mushrooms.' A. Jonas, Quincy, Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 13, 1858. *Ib.*

Douglas men were stronger against Buchanan than against the Republicans. Theo. H. Price, Ottawa, Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 15, 1858. *Ib.*

'Few dare come out there [Macoupin Co.] and advocate Douglas against Buchanan while nearly half that party with a competent leader would declare for Buchanan against Douglas.' Jno. Trible, Alton, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 13, 1858. *Ib.*

knew that he could not win unless he about-faced, so strongly was sentiment running in Illinois against the Kansas fraud. They understood Douglas, they declared, and they refused to be caught in so plain a trap. Had they built up the Republican organization to let it thus be broken up now? [1] The editor of the most important Republican paper in the West suggested that if Douglas would join the new party openly, he might be given 'the hope of a place in the Cabinet of the next Republican President' — but for Senator! No! Lincoln must have that place if the Republicans should win.[2]

[1] The position of the Illinois Republicans was first publicly stated — and best stated — by Gustave Koerner in the St. Louis *Anzeiger des Westens*. It was copied in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, and the *Chicago Tribune* published a translation of it. Koerner, II, 54–6. The whole Republican press said the same thing.

Carl Schurz continued to think all his life that 'It would thus have disgraced the virginity of the Republican party beyond the possibility of retrieval.' *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, II, 88.

'If the Republicans of Illinois should . . . re-elect Mr. Douglas, their party would be so disintegrated that the State would be lost to freedom in 1860.' *Chicago Tribune*, April 21, 1858.

Private letters from Republican politicians were emphatic against Republican support of Douglas.

Governor Bissell wrote Trumbull that 'by *our* friends, generally, no *credit* whatever is allowed him.' Douglas's sole motive was to make sure of reëlection. 'But the people understand him.' Bissell, Springfield, to Trumbull, Dec. 12, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

'The course of the Republican party is plain. Let it keep clear of all alliances, and profit by the [party] treason, without taking the traitor to its embraces.' Charles L. Wilson (editor *Chicago Journal*), Chicago, to Trumbull, Dec. 14, 1857. *Ib.*

'When Judge D. is made our Leader . . . the [Republican] party is scattered and Disbanded in Ill[inois]. I never will be a party to that *Fraud. . . . Are our friends crazy?*' Jesse K. Dubois, to Trumbull, Springfield, Apr. 8, 1858. *Ib.*

'You cannot get the Republicans of Illinois to touch him [Douglas] with a thousand foot pole. . . . Illinois will this fall go 25 to 30 thousand republican if the work is permitted to go on in a legitimate consistent way.' Parmenas Bond to Trumbull, Carlyle, Ill., June 2, 1858. *Ib.*

'Great God, I was once proud of the name of Democrat. . . . And Oh! my country! . . . Are we to have a captain . . . not of our choice, a traitor to our cause, . . . forced upon us? . . . [It] is an insult and an infamy that I will not passively submit to.' L. P. Cooper, Marshall, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 17, 1858. *Ib.*

To like effect were numbers of other letters from all over the State. For example, John Tillson, Quincy, Nov. 30, 1857; A. Jonas, Dec. 5, 1857, and Apr. 11, 1858; W. B. Archer, Marshall, Jan. 21, 1858; Wm. Pickering, Albion, Jan. 11, 1858; J. T. Knox, —, Jan. 4, 1857; D. L. Phillips (Land Dept. I.C.R.R. Co.) Chicago, Jan. 2, 1858; Bailhache and Baker (owners *Illinois State Journal*), Springfield, Dec. 18, 1857.

A few Republicans felt not unkindly toward Douglas for his Lecompton stand, but even most of these thought that he should be used as long as he could help the Republican cause, and then dropped. Wm. C. Fleharty, Apple Grove, Ill., Jan. 4, 1858. '"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."' Charles Johnson, York, Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 6, 1858. *Ib.*

[2] Charles H. Ray, editor of *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Chicago, to Trumbull, March 9, 1858. *Ib.*

Always anxious to prevent party feuds, Lincoln was now acutely so. Republican papers in Chicago were making war on 'Long John' Wentworth, owner and editor of the *Chicago Democrat*, and one of the ablest party managers in the State. He was an original Republican, but other editors and rival politicians hated and assailed him. In a moment, we shall hear the charge that Wentworth was plotting to be made Senator and we shall see the nomination of Lincoln in order to prevent the success of Wentworth's plans.

In a letter to Whitney on a legal matter Lincoln went out of his way to add a strong protest against the attacks on Wentworth. 'Let me say to you confidentially, that I do not entirely appreciate what the republican papers of Chicago are so constantly saying against Long John. I consider those papers truly devoted to the republican cause, and not unfriendly to me; but I *do* think that more of what they say against "Long John" is dictated by personal malice than they themselves are conscious of. We cannot afford to lose the services of "Long John" and I do believe the unrelenting warfare made upon him, is injuring our cause. I mean this to be confidential,' of course; but let Whitney 'quietly co-operate' with my friend, John O. Johnson, who was 'trying to get up a republican organization.'[1] In short, without offending the friendly Chicago Republican editors, let Whitney and Johnson stop the newspaper assaults upon the strong Chicago politician.

The situation at home and news from the East, especially Greeley's course, depressed Lincoln extremely. One morning he came into the office and told his partner how he felt toward the New York editor: 'Greeley is not doing me right. . . . I am a true Republican and have been tried already in the hottest part of the anti-slavery fight, and yet I find him taking up Douglas, a veritable dodger — once a tool of the South, now its enemy — and pushing him to the front.'[2]

Worried by Lincoln's gloom, the junior partner went East to learn what he could and, if possible, to do something to help his

[1] Lincoln to Whitney, Springfield, Dec. 18, 1857. Photostat, among others, of Whitney MSS. owned by Judge Henry Horner, Chicago, Ill. Judge Horner was the partner of Whitney's son. The letter is also in *Works:* XI, 102.

[2] Herndon, II, 390–1.

chief; but he defensively adds that Lincoln did not want him to go.[1] Herndon wished to see Douglas more than any one else: '*I want to look him in the eye.*'[2] He could make the trip easily since his time at home was chiefly taken up by people crowding the office about 'three cent law suits;'[3] the journey would not be expensive to the Bank Commissioner of Illinois who travelled on passes as all public officials, as well as railroad attorneys, then did.

Douglas was sick in bed, but he saw Herndon and asked about Lincoln. 'He is not in anybody's way, not even in yours, Judge Douglas,' said Lincoln's emissary, astutely. Nor was *he* in Lincoln's way, responded Douglas, undeceived and with the politician's self-defensive guile; *he* would not start a fight. 'Give Mr. Lincoln my regards when you return, and tell him I have crossed the river and burned my boat.'[4]

Carefully Herndon went over the situation with Trumbull who was 'quite positive, however, that Douglas had no idea of casting his lot with the Republican party.' Seward, Wilson, and other Republican leaders gave his agent cold comfort as a matter of fact.[5] Hastily he wrote to Lincoln, telling what he had heard.[6]

Off to New York went the junior partner to plead Lincoln's cause with Greeley. The editor stood by his guns; he wanted Douglas sent back to the Senate, and said that the Republican papers of Illinois were fools to oppose him. Herndon protested — was Greeley really for the new party or did he 'want Douglas to ride to power through the North, which he has so much abused and betrayed?'

'Let the future alone,' Greeley retorted; 'it will all come right. Douglas is a brave man. Forget the past and sustain the *righteous*.'

[1] Herndon, II, 392.

[2] Herndon to Parker, March 4, 1858. Newton, 150.

[3] Same to same, Feb. 24, 1858. *Ib.*, 144.

[4] Herndon, II, 'Bill Herndon is here — says Douglas is the biggest man on earth, and all that.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, March 11, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[5] Newton, 151.

[6] Herndon to Lincoln, Boston, March 24, 1858. Herndon, II, 395. 'I wrote you a hasty letter from Washington.'

'Good God, *righteous*, eh!' exclaimed Herndon, when by letter he reported this talk to his chief.[1] Greeley had also said: 'The Republican standard is too high; we want something practical.' What a sentiment from the apostle of liberty and light! Yet this was at least one opinion of the radical editor with which Lincoln agreed, as we shall see.

In Boston, 'this city of notions,' as Herndon called it, Governor Banks and others asked Lincoln's messenger:

'You will sustain Douglas in Illinois, won't you?'

'*No, never!*' exclaimed the loyal Herndon to the surprise of the Boston Republicans, and he talked to them about Lincoln. But, 'the Northern men are cold to me,' he wrote to his senior. 'It is my duty to state what is going on, so that you may head it off.'[2] Lincoln needed no urging to repair Republican alignment, if broken. 'Mr. Lincoln is now in Chicago,' reported the party organizer, Johnson; 'our friends all over the State are hopeful and working with a will.'[3]

When the junior partner came back he brought with him 'additional sermons and lectures by Theodore Parker, . . . one of these was a lecture on "The Effect of Slavery on the American People."' Lincoln read and liked it, and marked with pencil Parker's favorite sentence which we have heard the Boston preacher use so often: 'Democracy is direct self government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people.'[4] Herndon brought back another book, which Lincoln did not like, but which was to become the most effective of Republican campaign documents before and during the campaign for his election to the Presidency. It was Helper's *Impending Crisis* which, in due time, we shall look into. Herndon had had a good time but had accomplished nothing for his hero.

In Illinois the old line Democrats and officeholders grew ever

[1] Herndon to Lincoln, Boston, March 24, 1858. Herndon, II, 394–5.

[2] *Ib.* On his trip Herndon also stopped at Baltimore and Philadelphia, and he visited Plymouth and Lowell, Mass. He came back by Niagara Falls and through Canada to Chicago. Herndon to Trumbull, Apr. 7, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

Herndon returned to Springfield, Apr. 5, 1858, having been gone just one month; he had a fine trip 'bating a little for disappointments and rebuffs.' Herndon to Parker, April 7, 1858. Newton, 156–8.

[3] John O. Johnson, Springfield, Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 16, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[4] Herndon's statement in Herndon. II. 396.

more active against Douglas. Heads of his United States marshals, collectors, and postmasters fell by the dozen.[1] An Administration paper called the Douglas organ at Springfield a 'dirty blackguard and lying thief;'[2] the Douglas press retorted that the Administration leaders were 'stink fingers.'[3] Let the good work go on, said the Republicans to one another: 'If they will only make a Kilkenney cat affair of it, so much the better.'[4] There was small fear that they would not. So implacable was the wrath of the factions that such violent pro-Southern and pro-slavery Democrats as John A. Logan, 'an arrant trickster of the blackguard order,'[5] as the Republican organ at Springfield then branded him, said that they preferred even Seward to the President.[6] The Administration men felt even more bitter toward the party 'traitor' — anything to beat Douglas! Local conventions of Administration Democrats passed resolutions denunciatory of him — they would do what they could to 'silence' him, ran one adopted at Aurora.[7] A big Administration meeting at North Chicago was of like temper.[8]

'I really believe his [Buchanan's ticket] will poll as many votes next fall in Illinois as Douglas's ticket,' Medill, of the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote to Trumbull; at any rate the Republicans must 'nurse' the Administration Democrats; the Douglas men despair of his getting back to the Senate.[9] Unauthorized by

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Jan. 30, March 24, April 30, May 8, June 7, 30, July 8, 23; *Ottawa Republican*, Feb. 20; *Quincy Whig*, Feb. 22; *Rockford Republican*, Feb. 25; *Chicago Daily Times*, April 6, 16, 1858.

[2] *Cairo* (Ill.) *Times and Delta*, April 7, 1858.

[3] *Quincy Herald*, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, June 19, 1858.

[4] David L. Phillips, Land Office (I.C.R.R. Co.), Jonesboro Station, Union Co., Ill., to Trumbull, Feb. 16, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[5] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, April 22, 1858.

[6] Ben. L. Wiley, Anna, Ill., to Trumbull, March 2, 1858. Trumbull papers.

[7] *Chicago Press*, March 30, 1858.

Accounts of these anti-Douglas Democratic County Conventions were published conspicuously in the Republican press: *Quincy Whig*, June 4; *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 8; *Aurora Beacon*, June 10, 17. These Administration conventions continued to be held throughout the campaign.

The *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 11, 27, June 2, clipped from Administration papers in Illinois vitriolic excerpts against Douglas.

[8] *Chicago Press*, March 11, 1858.

[9] Joseph Medill to Trumbull, Apr. 13, 1858. Trumbull MSS. 'I look upon the defeat of Douglas as certain . . . the Democracy being so divided.' William M. Beck, editor *Olney Times*, to Trumbull, Apr. 11, 1858. *Ib.* If Administration Democrats put a ticket

him, his friends sent out 'feelers' to the Republicans — they wanted to make some sort of a deal; 'but as yet our men stand firm,' Herndon advised Parker. The junior partner admitted, however, that these advances 'do not purport to come from Douglas.' [1]

A country Republican editor was sure that Douglas's defeat was made certain by the completeness of the Democratic split.[2] The fight between the Democratic factions was another 'war of the roses,' said the *Quincy Whig*.[3] 'Buchanan is driving off the Douglas men every day and my firm conviction is that he will have at least one-third of the democracy of this State,' the Republican State Chairman happily reported to Trumbull.[4] It was also the 'conviction' of the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* that Douglas would soon have fewer than a thousand supporters in that city — indeed he would be lucky if he had half that number.[5]

It is impossible to overstate the ferocity of the Democratic factions toward one another, and as we shall see, the hatred was more virulent than ever on election day, when, to beat Douglas, most of the President's supporters voted the Republican ticket — those in Chicago did so almost to a man.[6] The Republican managers knew what they were about when they fanned the fury between the sections of their old foes. The same thing has been done time and again, and is still done, with like results.

in the field 'our victory will be easy.' Thos. J. Moore, Starfield, Peoria Co., Ill., to Trumbull, Apr. 9, 1858. *Ib.* And see *Chicago Press*, March 20, 1858.

[1] Herndon to Parker, Apr. 17, 1858. Newton, 161. Herndon undoubtedly makes reference to a story in a letter by C. H. Ray, editor *Chicago Tribune*, stating that the editor of the *Chicago Times* proposed a working agreement with the Republicans by which Douglas would get out of Lincoln's way and 'take his chance by and by.' The details are contradictory and the whole is so absurd that mention is made of it only to show the excited and credulous state of mind of Illinois Republican politicians at that time. Some of them doubted it from the first. Jesse K. Dubois to Trumbull, Springfield, March 22, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

Parker had sent two sermons to Herndon whose letter was chiefly about them and religion. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the friendship between the Boston preacher and Lincoln's partner, and especially upon the fact that most of Parker's writings were in the office of Lincoln and Herndon.

[2] Beck, *Olney Times*, to Trumbull, Apr. 11, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Apr. 28, 1858.

[4] Judd to Trumbull, March 19, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[5] C. H. Ray, Chicago, to Trumbull, March 9, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[6] Sheahan, 433.

The conflict was between 'the Douglas heretics or the Buchanan orthodox Democrats. . . . Let the Buchanan men be up and doing,' said the wily Wentworth in an editorial of pretended fairness.[1] So Republicans hopefully believed that, at last, the locks of the Little Giant were shorn — or that he was a 'dead lion' or 'at least a toothless one,' as Lincoln is soon to describe him.

There were no signs of fear among the Douglas clan when, at Springfield, on April 21, 1858, the Democratic State Convention met. They outnumbered the Buchanan men ten to one and, without directly attacking the President by name, adopted a Douglas platform with a thunder of cheers.[2] The feature of the Convention was a fiery speech for Douglas by Usher F. Linder of Coles County, an old line Whig, who had joined the Democrats two years before on the 'negro equality' issue.[3] Most conspicuous of the delegates was the venerable Peter Cartwright, Lincoln's opponent for Congress a dozen years earlier. The old Methodist Circuit Rider was strong for Douglas, and to the charge that his hero had joined the black Republicans, the white-haired preacher exclaimed in a speech almost incoherent in its wrath: *he* gone to the black Republicans! 'Gone to Halifax!' [4]

Supporters of the Administration, numbering a little over a hundred, mostly postmasters and other Federal officials, bolted and called a State convention of 'the national Democracy' for June 9. The Douglas men branded them 'spaniels,' 'hounds,' 'janizaries.' [5] 'By Douglas I stand to the bitter end,' exclaimed

[1] *Chicago Daily Democrat,* March 11, 1858.

[2] Sheahan, 394. The Douglas platform declared for the Union, for States' Rights, and against 'sectional strife;' reaffirmed the Cincinnati platform as the only standard of Democratic faith; reasserted the principle of popular sovereignty, and demanded that the whole Lecompton Constitution be submitted to the people. Douglas and each of the Illinois Democratic delegation in the House were endorsed by name, for their fight against the Lecompton plan; and the Administration was approved *so far as it had or would carry out Democratic principles as set forth in the Cincinnati platform 'and affirmed in these resolutions.'* See also *Illinois Daily State Register,* Apr. 22, 1858. Italics author's.

[3] The *Chicago Daily Times,* Apr. 27, 1858, printed Linder's speech in full.

[4] *Chicago Press,* Apr. 23, 1858. 'Peter Cartwright, a venerable Methodist Boanerges . . . shut his eyes and went it blind, without knowing or caring what he said, or whom he hit.' *Chicago Tribune,* Apr. 23, 1858.

[5] *Illinois Daily State Journal,* April 23, 1858.

a powerful Democratic worker. 'What a spectacle! a few graceless and mercenary scoundrels, attempting to break down the Illinois Democracy!' [1]

The factions were hot, bitter, and malicious towards each other, wrote Herndon, who with his senior partner mingled with the throng and saw the bolt.[2] 'Do not forget that it is to be war to the knife. No quarters are to be asked or given' — a state of hostilities that delighted the Republicans.[3] They expected to 'have fun,' too, at the old line Democratic Convention. 'Douglas . . . is to be crushed by the Administration;' [4] predicted Herndon, and 'we may look out for squalls.' [5]

Which, asked Lincoln's organ in Springfield, '*is* the Democratic Party.' [6] The editor of that paper reported to Trumbull that 'as you are aware,' the *State Journal* had been doing all it could to incite Administration Democrats against Douglas; but that they now needed no further urging. 'They are hard at work manipulating throughout the State.' Douglas would lose half his strength if the Lecompton bill went through in any form. The Republicans were 'full of enthusiasm,' and after the Douglas Convention, they had a 'caucus' in the State Library, decided to have a Republican State Convention, and issued a call for it next day. 'Between the two Democracies,' the Republicans were sure to win.[7]

Lincoln was encouraged. The Democrats were downhearted, he wrote to Washburne, and 'our friends . . . in high spirits. They think that if we do not triumph, the fault will be our own, and so I really think.' [8] Yet he was disturbed by Greeley's efforts for Douglas and the partiality of Republican Senators and

[1] Aug. C. French, Lebanon, Ill., to Lanphier, June 14, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[2] Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, Apr. 24, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Herndon to Parker, Apr. 27, 1858. Newton, 161.

[4] Same to same, May 29, 1858. *Ib.*, 163.

[5] Herndon to Trumbull, Apr. 24, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[6] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Apr. 21, 1858.

[7] Edward L. Baker, editor *Illinois Daily State Journal*, Springfield, to Trumbull, May 1, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

Lincoln, Ray [editor *Chicago Tribune*], Judd [Republican State Chairman], Brown [editor *Alton Courier*], Hay, William Bross [of *Chicago Democratic Press* and later of the *Press* and *Tribune*], 'went down stairs' after the Democratic disruption and called their convention. Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, Apr. 24, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[8] Lincoln to Washburne, Apr. 26, 1858. *Works*, II, 356–8.

Representatives to him. Some Illinois Republicans suspected even Washburne, but Lincoln was sure that they were mistaken, he told his friend.[1] Still, 'we are not yet clear out of the woods by a great deal;' trouble might be stirred up over '"Americanism." If that were out of the way, for all the rest, I believe we should be "out of the woods."' [2]

Some strong Republicans were becoming lukewarm from another cause. Judge T. Lyle Dickey, one of Lincoln's best friends, went over to the enemy, because the new party was 'too closely allied to the abolitionists.' When Whitney told Lincoln of Dickey's probable defection, he took it greatly to heart and said that 'he did not know of any of his friends he felt so badly about losing, as Dickey.' [3] Another indication of trouble ahead was the small number of old line Whigs who took part in Republican county conventions.[4]

The Republican politicians of Illinois had worked hard to strengthen their party so as to be sure to win in 1858, and their prevision had been highly practical: in order to carry the Legislature, 'we must have *money* and let us *COLONIZE* some four or five districts — and begin now — this fall — without fail — this must be done — and can be done with money — and the end Justifies the means in this instance,' the Republican Secretary of State had written to Trumbull.[5] To provide ways and means for this good end, the State Committee met at Chicago

[1] Lincoln to Washburne, May 10, 1858. *Ib.*, 359.

[2] Same to same, May 15, 1858. *Ib.*, 361.

[3] Whitney, 382–3. Whitney's talk with Lincoln was after midnight in April, 1858, on the Illinois Central Railroad train from Champaign to Chicago. Lincoln explained that he 'had passes on the Illinois Central and Great Western, both — hence could get to Chicago by that circuitous route free, while he had no pass by the direct route.'

Dickey, an old line Whig, had been with Lincoln at the Bloomington Convention in 1856. He did not like the abolition tendency of the new party at that time but had gone with it reluctantly; and when the Abolitionist, Owen Lovejoy, was nominated for Congress as a Republican over Leonard Swett, Dickey bolted. But it would appear that he voted for Frémont.

So much notice of Dickey is necessary, because he was typical of many old line Whigs who wanted to be Republicans, but disliked 'niggerism' more than democracy; and also because Dickey became a serious factor in the Lincoln-Douglas fight.

[4] For instance, of forty-one delegates at the Republican Convention at Joliet only five were old line Whigs; while of ten delegates sent from there to the Republican State Convention, but one was an old line Whig. *Joliet Signal*, May 25, 1858.

[5] O. M. Hatch to Trumbull, Springfield, July 13, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

and State Chairman Judd, Joseph Medill, and a man of the name of Gage were appointed a sub-committee 'with full power' to look after the matter. When reporting from Springfield to Trumbull the outcome of this vital party conference, Hatch adds: 'Mr. Lincoln has not returned from Chicago.' [1]

Nothing was overlooked that might help the party. Agents were even sent out to get subscriptions for Republican newspapers, especially for the *Chicago Press and Tribune*. One of these agents was a young man of the name of John G. Nicolay of Pittsfield, Pike County, who was soon to be made Lincoln's private secretary. He could get few subscriptions, because of the hard times, he claimed; [2] but Secretary of State Hatch, who, with Trumbull, appears to have had Nicolay on his hands, declared that he was a failure as a newspaper solicitor and would have to be put in the State Auditor's office.[3] There we shall find him when news of Lincoln's nomination came.

Other agents had better luck — as C. D. Hay, who got five hundred subscribers to take the *Tribune*, 'which has great effect,' he wrote to Trumbull, but added that he feared 'that that lying, drunken demagogue Douglas will be returned to the U.S. Senate. We ought to put in the noble Lincoln and we would if we could have half a chance. . . . E. B. Webb and his clique here are *ultra*-pro-slavery, out against Lincoln.' [4]

Although so depressed by the enthusiasm of Republicans in other States for Douglas that he did nothing for a long time, Lincoln felt better when the Democrats began fighting one another more savagely; and thereafter he made speeches over the State wherever meetings could be arranged. Usually local Republicans spoke with him at the same time and place,[5] some-

[1] O. M. Hatch to Trumbull, July 17, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

[2] Nicolay, from Pike and Randolph Cos., to Trumbull, Dec. 20, 1857. *Ib.*

[3] O. M. Hatch, Springfield, Ill., Nov. 23, 1857. *Ib.* The obligation to take care of Nicolay may have arisen from the fact that he was editor of the *Pike Co. Free Press* in 1856 and had endorsed the call for the editors' meeting at Decatur, which, in turn, issued the call for the historic Bloomington Convention of that year. In 1857 Nicolay left the *Free Press* and Hatch and Trumbull appear to have had a hard time in finding occupation for him.

[4] C. D. Hay, from Burnt Prairie, Ill., to Trumbull, July 10, 1857. Also same to same, Oct. 4, and Nov. 8, 1857. *Ib.*

[5] For instance, at Moro, Ill., Mark Delahay, then living at Alton, Palmer, and Gillespie spoke with Lincoln. W. C. Flagg, Moro, Ill., to Trumbull, June 5, 1858. 'I

times with a strange understanding as to what was to be said. The sentiment of the party had crystallized about Lincoln for Senator and the rank and file, as well as most politicians, were for him.[1] 'I take it that it is a foregone conclusion that Abm. Lincoln will be the next Republican candidate for Mr. Douglas' seat, and that he will occupy it, if we have a majority, or, that we must make up our minds to a fight as soon as his friends can make a good ready,' said the leading Republican editor of the State.[2]

Lincoln's friends made 'a good ready,' indeed, as we shall presently see, so good, in fact, that they did not have to fight at all to nominate him. For he had taken to heart, although belatedly, the blunt warning of the Republican State Chairman that if he wanted to be Senator, he must work for it, especially in Central Illinois.[3]

The pressure from the Republican leaders and press of the East and even of States adjacent to Illinois, upon Illinois Republicans to support Douglas, did not abate.[4] The party organi-

have written Lincoln to come down to our [County] Convention and give us a speech.' C. D. Hay, Newton, Ill., to Trumbull, May 29, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[1] The fact that he had been 'cheated' out of the Senatorship when Trumbull was elected and that it was understood then that Lincoln should have the place next time, had much to do with this favorable trend to Lincoln. In an extremely long letter on the situation, Palmer wrote Trumbull that since Lincoln had helped elect Trumbull and thus put him and his friends in the forefront of the new party, they must now help elect Lincoln. Palmer, Carlinville, Ill., to Trumbull, May 25, 1858. *Ib.*

But agreement on Lincoln was not spontaneous. Early in the year, some were inquiring 'who is our best man against him [Douglas] — Lincoln?' L. Jay S. Turner, Southern Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 10, 1858. *Ib.*

'The *La Salle Press*, an able and out-spoken Republican paper, declares itself against any and all efforts to commit the Republicans of Illinois to the support of Wentworth or Lincoln.' *Chicago Daily Times*, May 26, 1858.

Even a fortnight after Lincoln was nominated for Senator by the Republican State Convention a Republican paper said that while it was 'heartily' for Lincoln, still 'in case Mr. Lincoln should decline the honor, or from cause not be run, we could name a number of other distinguished Republicans whom the people of Illinois would delight to honor, . . . any one of these would make a fit Representative with Lyman Trumbull, in sustaining the interests of the Prairie State at Washington.' *Canton Weekly Register*, July 6, 1858, quoting with approval the *Hamilton Representative*.

[2] C. H. Ray, Chicago, to Trumbull, March 9, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Judd, Chicago, to Trumbull, Apr. 19, 1858. 'If Lincoln expects to be Senator he must make a personal canvass for it in the center of the State. So I advised him two months ago — but I do not hear of any fruits.' *Ib.*

[4] From February to the time of Lincoln's nomination, editorials for Douglas were frequent in the New York *Tribune*. Greeley promptly answered the rebuke of the Chicago Republican papers. For instance see New York *Tribune*, May 11, 27, 1858.

zation and papers of that State were furious. Judd said that he would resign as State Chairman, if such a thing was done — 'I enter my solemn protest and shall ground my arms.' [1] Medill, whose paper had fiercely told Eastern journals to mind their own business and keep out of Illinois,[2] wrote to Herndon that he was afraid that Republicans in the north part of the State would go for Douglas who intended to 'assume steep Free-soil ground' and attack the President on the stump. Lincoln's conclusion was that 'there certainly is a double game being played somehow;' but unless Douglas played it better 'than we have often seen done,' he would lose more Democrats in the south part of the State than he would gain Republicans in the north.[3]

A story went the rounds that Seward, Weed, and Greeley had met Douglas in Chicago during October, 1857, and made an agreement that if that powerful Republican triumvirate would support Douglas for reëlection to the Senate next year, he would support Seward for the Presidency in 1860; and to this secret bargain Herndon attributed Douglas's 'savage attacks against Lecompton.' [4] It is not known who invented this canard. The tale was actually believed, although the presence in Chicago at the same time of men so much in the public eye as was each of the 'conspirators' could not have failed of notice in the press; and yet not a word was published that any of them was in town. Still more important, Greeley had broken with Seward four years earlier, because the Senator and Weed had not helped

[1] Judd to Trumbull, Chicago, March 7, 1858. Trumbull MSS. This confidential letter of the Republican State Chairman shows a close working arrangement between Republican managers and Administration Democrats: 'The declaration amongst the Democrats [of Chicago] was universal that Douglas's fate was sealed. . . . The present prospect is that the administration will have at least one third of the democracy of this State;' if Judd had to choose between the President and Douglas, 'I would sooner serve in the ranks of the administration.'

Judd insisted that the postmaster at Chicago, recently appointed by Buchanan in place of the Douglas postmaster, must be put in office at once: 'To hesitate about the confirmation of Cook, in the present state of dissolving Douglasism is the most suicidal policy that ever men of sense adopted.' The Republican State Chairman raged at Republicans in Washington who favored Douglas — they thus had killed the Republican party: 'Poor defunct institution swallowed up by a miserable Douglas faction yielding up the ghost of its own accord without ever being attacked.'

[2] For example, *Chicago Tribune*, Apr. 21, 1858. The Republican press throughout the State printed similar defiances.

[3] Lincoln to Washburne, May 27, 1858. *Works*, II, 361–2.

[4] Herndon to Parker, Springfield, Sept. 20, 1858. Newton, 215–6.

the editor to public office,[1] and from that time forward he was against the nomination of Seward.

With that shrewd common sense, as well as frankness and honesty, which were dominant elements of his character, Lincoln wrote to the editor of the *Chicago Journal* that he did not believe that Greeley's support of Douglas was the result of 'any secret arrangement' between them: he favored Douglas only because he believed that the reëlection of that eminent Senator would do 'the general cause of Republicanism more good than would the election of any one of our better undistinguished pure Republicans.' Seward, too, was in the same state of mind, said Lincoln, and neither he nor Greeley were doing anything directly for Douglas. Anyway, Lincoln would not retaliate. 'Let me pledge you my word that neither I, nor any friend so far as I know, has been setting [a] stake against Governor Seward. No combination has been made by me, or proposed to me, in relation to the next presidential candidate.' [2]

During all these months of Democratic division and quarreling and of Republican rejoicing, hope, doubt, suspicion, fear, and anger — months of wild rumor, vague imagining, fruitless plan — the relentless fight in Congress over the Lecompton Constitution had gone on. As we have seen, not all Southern men supported it,[3] not even all the fire-eaters. One of its opponents was in the Senate, the now venerable John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, stern old line Whig, ardent 'American,' and national leader of that party. Because of what now took place, we shall see him come to Douglas's help in the bitter struggle in Illinois just ahead of us, a circumstance that hurt Lincoln badly. Some, indeed, said that Crittenden beat Lincoln.

Senator Crittenden offered an amendment to the Lecompton bill which, in effect, was that the Constitution should be sent back to Kansas and the whole of it submitted to the people. The

[1] Greeley to Seward, New York, Nov. 11, 1854. *Horace Greeley:* Don C. Seitz, 160–6. 'It seems to me a fitting time to announce to you the dissolution of the political firm of Seward, Weed, and Greeley, by the withdrawal of the junior partner.' This letter, which explains so much in Republican politics for five years after it was written, was not made public until after Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency.

[2] Lincoln to Charles L. Wilson, June 1, 1858. *Works,* II, 362–4.

[3] 'The Tenn. and Ky. delegations are almost all *with us,* now.' Thos. L. Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, May 17, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

Democratic majority beat this, only Douglas and his three insurgents from that party voting for it. In the House, however, the Crittenden amendment was adopted. Douglas had carried with him the solid Democratic delegation from his own State, several Democratic Representatives from other parts of the North, and most 'Americans' from the South.

So Senate and House were deadlocked. From every point of view, the President was sure that, in some form, the Lecompton bill must pass. 'The defeat of the Bill would alarm the fears of the country for the Union, reduce the value of property, and injuriously interfere with our reviving trade,' he said in a 'private and confidential' letter.[1] Finally a compromise was devised by a Committee of Conference. It was offered in the House by William H. English of Indiana. This was the celebrated 'English Bill.' In substance, it provided that the people should vote on the Lecompton Constitution as a whole, and, if they ratified it, the State should be admitted at once; but if they rejected it, Kansas should remain out of the Union until that Territory had enough people to entitle her to one Representative in Congress.[2]

By this adroit manœuvre, enough rebellious Democrats were won over to pass the bill.[3] Also rank corruption was made use of. Wendell, the Public Printer, and owner of the Administration organ, spent money 'by the bushel,' House officials and newspaper men were employed as lobbyists, members were

[1] Buchanan to Denver, March 27, 1858. Moore, 200–2. 'The Pres[ident] is putting on the thumb screws and says he will run it through in 30 days or break.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, Jan. 21, 28, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[2] The number required was 93,423. Kansas then had about 35,000 population. 'The English scheme is a miserable one. No one likes it. We would beat it twenty votes but for pressure — but it may pass.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, Apr. 29, 1858. *Ib.*

[3] Senator Pugh of Ohio deserted Douglas on this bill.

Governors of Southern States who thought it their duty to call secession conventions if 'Southern rights' were again denied, were relieved by the passage of the English bill, albeit, under that measure, or any other, there was no likelihood that Kansas would be made a slave State.

'I am truly glad we are rid of this vexed question. I feel that the South has lost nothing of principle by the passage of the bill. . . . It, however, will receive the hearty approval of the great mass of our people. Had the bill not passed, there would have been great confusion in Georgia. The storm was suspended in a breathless calm awaiting the result in Washington,' which would have broken if the bill had failed. 'No action which you or I or any one else could have taken would have prevented it. . . . I rejoice at the result.' Joseph E. Brown, Governor of Georgia, to Stephens, Milledgeville, May 7, 1858. *Rept. Am. Hist. Assn.*, 1911, II, 434.

bought outright.[1] Fervid pleas were made to Douglas to accept the compromise; here was a chance to line up with his party again, they said; in reality he had won, since the whole Constitution would be submitted, and it was reasonably certain that the people would reject the Lecompton Constitution at the polls. Even the Democratic managers at Springfield wanted him to take this easy way out and thus make peace in the party.[2]

With scorn Douglas said, No! The English Bill was a trick and a fraud — sheer bribery, in fact; unless the people accepted a slave State Constitution, they were to be punished by being kept out of the Union until they became nearly three times more numerous than they now were. As a rule, he was for statehood for any Territory only when it had population enough to elect a member of the House; but in the case of Kansas, a population big enough to make it a slave State, was big enough to make it a free State.

What mad obstinacy! said regular Democrats; what sheer, egotistic bull-headedness! From the President down, they were more furious, if possible, than before. Should such insurgency go unpunished! No! At all hazards Douglas must be beaten. The President was puzzled as well as angry: 'How Douglas . . . could have preferred the do-nothing policy, with all its inevitable consequences, to the English Bill, which leaves to the people of Kansas to decide their own destiny, I am utterly at a loss to

[1] *Covode Investigation*, 120–56. Wendell said to a clerk of the House whose services he purchased: 'A bushel of gold is no object in this matter.' Testimony M. P. Bean, Apr. 26, 1860. *Ib.*, 120–3. Wendell gave Bean $5000.

Although the Covode Investigation was largely a Republican partisan manœuvre, it uncovered frauds and corruption in the Departments as well as in Congress and thus rendered an inestimable public service. Buchanan bitterly opposed it, chiefly on the ground that it was a mere partisan dragnet, for campaign purposes. The celebrated report became one of the strongest Republican campaign documents in the election of 1860 and knowledge of venality thus given had much to do with the election of Lincoln.

'Well it's over. . . . The progress of this business has been damnably corrupt. The adm[inistration] has bought men like hogs in the market.' Harris, Washington, to Lanphier, Apr. 30, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

'Some ten days ago we went down to Washington . . . we stayed in the great city five days. . . . Offices are bought just as openly as the butcher buys the beef intended for his customers.' *Chicago Daily Times*, March 17, 1858. Editor's statement.

[2] 'The *Register* cabal, I am sure, were very anxious to have Douglas adopt the English substitute.' Edward L. Baker, editor *Illinois State Journal*, Springfield, to Trumbull May 1, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

imagine,' he wrote to an intimate friend several weeks after the matter was settled and when he was on his vacation.[1]

'Fun' indeed the Republicans had, as Herndon predicted, when, on June 9, 1858, the Administration Democrats held their State Convention at Springfield. The proceedings were 'boisterous.' Douglas was denounced in stinging resolutions, and his defeat demanded. He and his supporters were 'rebels' and 'enemies of Democracy,' said the Convention speakers; the President was 'able and patriotic.' [2] Douglas men present were assaulted, noses pulled, blows struck.[3] Candidates were put in the field against those nominated by the Douglas Convention. One of these was former Governor John Reynolds, 'the Old Ranger,' a stubborn Democrat of the Jackson school.

It was well known that Lincoln would oppose Douglas, yet the 'Danites' were also out to beat the Little Giant, said his campaign biographer two years later.[4] The Republican press and organization continued to cheer the Administration faction just as the Democrats had done with the Fillmore men in the Frémont campaign. In 1860 the editor of the *Chicago Times* charged, without denial then or thereafter, that the Republicans spent sixty thousand dollars to keep 'the Danite party on its legs' that year.[5]

Thus was the stage set for the historic Republican State Convention at Springfield, June 16, 1858. Another and an indispensable piece of scenery, however, must here be shifted into place. During the fight in the Senate against the Lecompton Constitution, the Republican Senators made a concerted strate-

[1] Buchanan, Bedford Springs, Pa., to William B. Reed, July 31, 1858. Moore, x, 224–5. This remarkable letter clearly reveals the President's state of mind:

'I shall ever thank Heaven that my administration has been so successful in pacifying the Country on the Kansas question. Had Mr. Douglas been successful in defeating [all] Legislation on the subject, the Country would have been in a terrible condition at the present moment. The exasperation between the North and the South would have been more . . . dangerous than ever, and the Union would have been shaken to its centre. Georgia and Alabama, in this contingency, had provided by law for the call of State Conventions with a view to secession. Throughout the South all or nearly all are now satisfied; and General Davis of Mississippi and other gentlemen of high character who had been hitherto considered extreme have been making speeches in the North in favor of the Union. General D. is "a marvellous proper man."'

[2] *Alton Daily Courier*, June 14, 1858. [3] *Belleville Advocate*, June 16, 1858.

[4] Sheahan, 396–7. The 'Danites' were the supporters of Buchanan. [5] *Ib.*, 416.

gic move of first importance: they concentrated their fire on the Dred Scott decision and the Supreme Court. For eight years the Free-Soilers and Republicans had been attacking the judiciary in general, because it had sustained and executed the Federal statute and the Constitution as to fugitive slaves;[1] for a year the Dred Scott decision had been the best talking point the Republicans had, until the Lecompton 'infamy' gave them another, and now the whole agitation was brought to a head.

Republican Senators denounced Taney's opinion, denounced Taney, denounced the Supreme Court; some of them assailed all Courts. I have been brought up to respect Courts but have long since got over that superstition, asserted Hale: 'I have a higher respect for the Lecompton convention than I have for the Supreme Court.'[2] Wade said the same thing, and added: The Supreme Court could not 'decide the law of the land for every department of this Government. . . . Each department must act for itself,'[3] a good statement of the Republican constitutional view at that time, and one which Lincoln is often to repeat in his conflict with Douglas.[4]

The strongest appeal to voters made by any Republican Senator was that of a man who had just entered the Senate, and who was to become the most forcible member of that body during Lincoln's Administration, Zachariah Chandler of Michigan. It was his maiden speech. His tribute to free workingmen became one of the most effective of Republican campaign arguments; while his assault on the Supreme Court for the Dred Scott decision requires notice at this particular point in our story. 'They dare not attempt, at this time, . . . assert their whole meaning; but they take it piecemeal. . . . This is not the last aggression' — and Senator Chandler recounted the phases of the 'conspiracy,' the end of which was to be the spread of

[1] Warren, II, Chap. XXV. This and the two succeeding chapters of Mr. Warren's careful work are indispensable to an understanding of the politics of that time.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. I, 341, Jan. 20, 1858.

[3] *Ib.*, Pt. II, 1115, March 13, 1858.

[4] The *Illinois Daily State Journal*, March 11, 12, 1858, printed Seward's 'conspiracy' speech in full, and at various times, extracts from those of other Republican Senators. Lincoln also had the *Congressional Globe* which contained all proceedings in House and Senate.

slavery over the whole land and the revival of the African Slave trade.[1]

All Republican Senators agreed that the Dred Scott decision was but a part of one great plan, part of a 'program,' Fessenden of Maine called it in the best speech made upon the subject. See the procession of events, he said, each following the other logically, each necessary to the next, as if all had been arranged from the first! — Douglas's repeal of the Missouri Compromise, Pierce's course in Kansas, Taney's opinion, Buchanan's Lecompton policy! What could be plainer? The Supreme Court had even put off the Dred Scott decision until after the election; if the result of that had been different, the decision would have been different. And every step of the conspiracy had been taken under the pretence of giving the country peace! Had that been the result? On the contrary, the Nation was more disturbed than ever. Such a state of things must not go on. The conspiracy must be broken up. Slavery must be restricted because it was 'a curse,' a moral wrong.[2]

Seward summed up the Republican indictment in the dramatic charge of conspiracy already quoted.[3] Thus the Dred Scott decision as an essential element of a great plot to nationalize slavery, was made the chief count in the Republican indictment; [4] in a moment we shall hear Lincoln restate that count and make the strongest argument ever made in support of it.

And now the gigantic figure of 'Long John' Wentworth stalks fully into view, as a principal actor at a decisive hour in Lincoln's life. Since the perturbed Springfield lawyer had tried, through

[1] *Cong. Globe,* 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. II, 1072–89.

[2] *Ib.*, Pt. I, 614, *et seq.* In connection with all these speeches see Lincoln's house-divided speech.

[3] Senator Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana, who was to become Attorney General in the Confederate Government, made an uncommonly strong speech in rebuke of Seward's attack on Taney and the Supreme Court. *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. II, 1065–72. 'Accursed, thrice accursed, is that fell spirit of party' which could lead a Senator to do such a thing, etc.

Benjamin paid a noble tribute to Taney: 'he went so far as to send the old man to Heaven even before he died,' sneered Wade in reply. *Ib.*, 1114–5, March 13, 1858.

[4] 'If acquiesced in' the Dred Scott decision would carry slavery into every free State — this is to become the 'living issue for the next ten years before the American people.' Senator James Reed Doolittle of Wisconsin in Senate, Feb. 11, 1858, *Cong. Globe,* 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. I, 665.

Whitney and his party organizer, Johnson, to quiet the party row in Chicago, talk had sprung up that even if the new party should elect a majority of the Legislature, Wentworth would control it and be made Senator in Douglas's place. He had just been chosen Mayor of Chicago by the largest majority ever given in that city,[1] Republican factions combining for the moment, in order to beat the Douglas candidate as badly as they could.[2] Thus and with great éclat, 'Long John' had become the first Republican Mayor, who, as the party nominee and under the party name, had been chosen in any leading city in the land.[3]

The part played by Wentworth at this critical time in Lincoln's career is vital. Wentworth was a member of a famous Colonial and Revolutionary family of New Hampshire. After graduating from Dartmouth, he went West to seek his fortune, and, when he was twenty-one years old, finally reached Chicago on foot.[4] He helped to organize the little town and to get from the Legislature a charter for it. Then he returned East to take a course of law lectures at Harvard, and while there, wrote editorials for the *Chicago Democrat*, then edited by John Calhoun, bought it in 1836 on his return to Chicago, and speedily made it the leading daily newspaper of the Northwest.

He was in Congress four years before Lincoln became a member of the House, and stayed there eight years longer than Lincoln did.[5] When Lincoln was in Congress, Wentworth was an anti-slavery leader, and spoke and voted consistently against the slave interests. He fought the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and, the day after it was accomplished, joined other

[1] *Chicago Magazine*, Aug., 1857. I, 394.

[2] 'To show the world and his wife that Douglas's recent course had not broken the Republican ranks we went into the recent fight in our city. It was the most desperate political contest I ever had any connection with. We triumphed and what is the result? Men without the state are to break us down by elevating the very man [Douglas] we have prostrated in his stronghold.' Judd, Chicago, to Trumbull, March 7, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] In spite of all efforts to beat him thereafter, Wentworth was re-elected Mayor and continued in that office for several years. He was Mayor throughout the war.

[4] *Chicago Magazine*, 394.

[5] Wentworth was in his twenty-seventh year and Lincoln in his thirty-eighth year when they were elected to Congress. Wentworth was six years younger than Lincoln. The Chicago District extended to Danville.

anti-slavery members of Congress in the notable meeting to abandon the old parties and form a new one. Thus Wentworth was one of the founders of the Republican Party to which Lincoln finally attached himself.

No more resourceful politician lived in the State than 'Long John,' as Wentworth was called because of his great stature, for he was taller even than Lincoln.[1] But, during an extended career as a busy and aggressive politician and fighting journalist, he had made relentless enemies. Other papers than his own, Democratic and Republican, constantly denounced him in libellous terms. Yet at conventions he always turned up with a majority of delegates.

And now persistent rumor had it that the Chicago boss intended to pack Republican legislative conventions in the northern counties, nominate his men for the General Assembly and control that body if the Republicans should win in the fall. If Wentworth did this he would be made Senator, or at least, Lincoln would not be given that place.[2] Of this there was real dan-

[1] Six feet six inches. *Chicago Magazine*, 399.

[2] 'John Wentworth, the great leader of the Republicans in Illinois, the man who hopes to be my successor if he can be elected.' Douglas in the Senate, June 15, 1858. *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. III, 3058.

'Wentworth is a candidate, he openly declares that Lincoln can never get elected. Wentworth will go to the legislature from this county [Cook]. . . . They say that if he [Lincoln] does not carry Middle Illinois he forfeits all claim.' J. W. Sheahan (editor *Chicago Times*) to Lanphier, May 23, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

'The Republican aspirants for his [Douglas's] seat are Abrm. Lincoln and Long John Wentworth. . . . As there is no hope of electing a Buchaneer to the Senate, the patronage of the Administration is being made operative in the assistance of Lincoln or Wentworth,' etc. *Cincinnati Commercial* (Republican), clipped in *Chicago Daily Times*, May 25, 1858.

'Wentworth's blowers and strikers are busy in killing off Lincoln for the Senatorship. Their game in this District is to make Lincoln hang to Lovejoy's coat tail for Republican strength, well knowing that the semblance of a bargain with Lovejoy will choke Lincoln to death among the Republicans of the State generally. It is all arranged and we shall soon see the Lovejoy organs commence puffing Lincoln.' *Our Constitution*, Feb. 6, 1858. The *Joliet Signal*, July 27, charged that this deal between Lincoln and Lovejoy had been made.

'John Wentworth is a candidate for the United States Senate, and under no possible circumstances will Wentworth allow Lincoln to be chosen. . . . Wentworth intends (and will succeed in so doing) to pack the nominating conventions in the northern counties, that all republican candidates for the legislature will be his own creatures, pledged to vote for him through thick and thin.' *Chicago Times*, May 19, 1858, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, May 21, 1858.

'As we have frequently asserted before, the Chicago autocrat of black republicanism will have complete control of a majority of the black republican votes in the next legisla-

ger, for 'Long John' did not think highly of Lincoln from any point of view, a state of mind he never got over.[1]

It was said, too, that Wentworth would have persuasive arguments against Lincoln. Had not Lincoln failed to capture for the Republicans the old line Whigs of Central Illinois in the Frémont campaign? And was not that his particular task? Had he not lost all that part of the State, lost his own district, his own county, his own town? If the same thing should happen again in the present campaign (and happen it did, as we shall see) what possible claim would Lincoln have upon Republicans to make him Senator in case they should elect a majority of the Legislature? None at all. On the contrary, it would then be the duty of the Republican caucus to select a better man — and Wentworth meant to name that man.

Such, according to political gossip, were the purposes of the Chicago Mayor and his reasons for them. How much truth there was in these reports cannot now be determined, but undoubtedly there was some ground for them. At any rate the story spread, and, in view of Wentworth's reputation, was widely believed. So his enemies and Lincoln's friends resolved to outwit the Chicago manipulator by the simple device of declaring in the Republican platform that Lincoln was the Republican candidate for Senator. Such a thing never had been done before in any State — even the Douglas Convention had not thus named their idol — and Wentworth could not well have foreseen so unprecedented a move.

It would have availed him nothing if he had suspected it, for the Chairman of the Republican State Committee, Norman B. Judd, was leader of the Chicago faction hostile to Wentworth,

ture, and if that party should have a majority of the whole . . . he will control the nominations of its caucus.' *Illinois Daily State Register*, May 21, 1858, editorial.

On May 31, 1858, Wentworth's paper printed a long and adroit editorial accusing Douglas of being the candidate of the Catholic Church that had made a deal with Seward, an incident of which would be the defeat of Lincoln for Senator and a division of the Illinois school fund.

[1] Wentworth to Herndon, Feb. 4, 1866. Weik MSS. This letter, marked 'Private' and written 'merely to oblige you [Herndon],' is a comparison of the careers of Lincoln, Douglas, Hardin, and Baker, as Wentworth observed the men from the time he went to Chicago in 1836. It is decidedly unfavorable to Lincoln.

When gathering material for his *Life of Lincoln*, Herndon had written several men who knew Lincoln, for their estimate of him. Wentworth's letter is one of the answers.

and head of the Cook County delegation to the State Convention at Springfield. Also, on this delegation was Charles L. Wilson, editor of the *Chicago Journal*, and a violent antagonist of the Mayor. As State Chairman, Judd knew and had great influence with most Republican politicians of the State nearly all of whom were delegates, and he hated Wentworth only less than he hated Douglas.

Thus the tall, capable, and picturesque scion of the Wentworth family comes into our drama; and thus Fate made his ambitions and plans, and the successful effort to defeat them, decisive elements in Lincoln's life and, of consequence, in American history. Lincoln, of course, knew of the scheme to thwart Wentworth, but that plotter must be given no warning:

'I suppose it is hardly necessary that any expression of preference for U.S. Senator, should be given at the county, or other local conventions and meetings,' Lincoln wrote to an anxious party worker. 'When the Republicans of the whole State get together at the State Convention, the thing will then be thought of, and something will or will not be done, according as the united judgment may dictate.' [1] Yet before the State Convention met, Republican conventions in all but five counties of Illinois had passed resolutions for Lincoln.[2]

June 16, 1858, was a 'lovely day' in Springfield. Jubilant throngs of Republicans filled the town. They were sure to win, they thought, and it was a happy crowd that filled the Hall of Representatives when the Convention was called to order. Nearly all counties were represented. As at other Republican Conventions, even the national gathering at Philadelphia two years earlier, no hard and fast rule was applied to credentials. All who came were welcomed, and the number of delegates were estimated to be between one thousand [3] and fifteen hundred,[4] the northern counties having sent excess delegations.[5]

All was harmony and enthusiasm.[6] At this very day and hour

[1] Lincoln to S. A. Hurlburt, Springfield, June 1, 1858. *Works*, II, 364–5.

[2] *Rockford Republican*, June 17, 1858.

[3] Browning's *Diary*, 327. June 16, 1858.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 17, 1858.

[5] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 17, 1858.

[6] Browning's *Diary*, 327.

our party 'is the most powerful party on the continent of North America,' boasted Richard Yates, the temporary chairman, in a speech suited to the occasion, and the crowd yelled. In reward for his exposure of Douglas's motives and appeal that the Republicans of Illinois hold fast, Gustave Koerner was made President of the Convention,[1] thus recognizing the German vote. He, too, made a rousing speech — the Republicans would win 'by an overwhelming majority.' Hurrah, shouted the believing delegates.[2]

Browning was selected as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions and wrote the platform as he had done two years before at Bloomington.[3] 'A small caucus' in the State Library the night before the Convention met had directed the Quincy lawyer to prepare it.[4] Although Lincoln was there, Browning does not say so, nor does he make mention of Lincoln at any time when describing the Convention in his meticulous Diary.

The platform was cautious, some planks illogical. The Republican managers, intent on getting votes, had kept their ears to the ground. The voice of the people was for economic reforms, especially in the shape of largess from the National Government, and that voice was heeded. 'There is no subject before Congress of one half the national importance' as land grants to agricultural colleges, Trumbull was informed by the President of the Clark County Agricultural Society.[5] Workingmen and farmers, especially German emigrants, were eager for the enact-

[1] Koerner, II, 58. [2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 18, 1858.

[3] 'I drafted the platform which was adopted without dissent.' Browning's *Diary*, 327.

[4] *Ib.*, June 15, 1858.

[5] John H. Kinnicutt to Trumbull, Northfield, Clark Co., Ill., Jan. 25, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

The agrarian movement, already discernible in 1854, had now become strong. About the time of the Republican State Convention, a great meeting of the farmers of Central Illinois passed stern resolutions against 'trading combinations,' banks, and railways for depressing prices and raising interest and freight rates; and urged the formation of a 'Farmer's Club' in every community, in order to strengthen the economic condition of farmers and raise them to that 'position among the classes of mankind . . . that nature destines them to occupy' and which they had not achieved because of 'their own neglect.' *Our Constitution*, June 26, 1858. Not a word did the farmers say about slavery.

Even stronger resolutions were adopted by a 'Farmers Congress' held at Centralia later in the year: 'the producing class should assert, not only their independence but their supremacy;' rules for trading, made by 'non-producers' were unfair, and laws framed and executed 'by lawyers' did not represent 'popular sentiment;' producers and

ment of a homestead law by which farms would be given out of the public domain to the landless.[1] Everybody wanted currency and banking reform,[2] internal improvements, and the building of the Pacific Railroad. Even hostility to slavery was put largely on economic grounds — the disadvantage of free labor in competition with slave labor.[3] Through all, of course, ran the moral element, not in the abstract, however, but in justification for material demands.

So the Republican platform combined all these elements. States' Rights must be upheld; in States where it existed, slavery must be let alone; our Government was 'instituted for free men,' and therefore public lands must be 'wrested' from speculators and greedy corporations and given to 'actual settlers;' the rights of free labor must be maintained, and, of consequence, rivers and harbors must be improved and the Pacific Railroad built; because 'we now compete in the markets of the country against the products of unpaid labor at depreciating prices,' it was 'eminently unjust' that the Administration should, 'by coercion' try to extend slavery into the Territories, or 'by patronage' should perpetuate it in the States; the Administration was 'recreant' to its 'trusts' because it had corruptly tried to carry out the purpose of the Kansas-Nebraska Act by forcing the Lecompton Constitution on an unwilling people; the Government must do all it could to suppress the slave trade; the Dred Scott decision announced the 'political heresy' that the Constitution carried slavery into the Territories; Congress was sovereign over the Territories and should keep 'the curse of slavery' out of them so as to preserve the

consumers must be brought closer together; to that end 'wholesale purchasing and selling agencies' must be established in 'the great centers of commerce,' etc. *Rockford Register*, Oct. 16, 1858. Again nothing was said about slavery.

For an understanding of the campaigns of 1858 and 1860, too much emphasis cannot be put on the agrarian and labor movements. They were phases of that economic development which became so conspicuous after the war, had much to do with pre-war elections, and greatly influenced Lincoln.

[1] T. Canisius, Alton, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 26, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[2] Same to same, Dec. 8, 1857. *Ib.*

[3] 'The free white laboring class is the chief bulwark of our political freedom. . . . Our National Territories are their natural and rightful inheritance, from which the ruinous and degrading competition of slave labor ought to be excluded.' *Quincy Whig*, June 3, 1858.

public domain for 'free men and free labor;' slavery was a 'municipal regulation, without any extraterritorial operation,' and 'no power on earth can carry and maintain slavery in the States against the will of their people;' the Government should keep friendly relations with all nations and 'enter into entangling alliances with none;' but injuries to Americans on the high seas must be 'redressed;' public expenses must be cut and 'radical reform' made in national finances.[1] Since the Know-Nothing or American vote must be had at all costs, and since the Germans had been placated by Koerner's elevation, the party declarations for tolerance made at Bloomington and Philadelphia two years earlier were now omitted.

Such was the Illinois Republican platform of 1858 on which Lincoln stood in his fight with Douglas. It proved, said the Republican organ that the party was not merely 'sectional,' as its opponents maliciously called it.[2] But Illinois was not yet a manufacturing State and no mention of the tariff was made; to have done so might have scared off former Democrats. For the present, the protective tariff appeal was left to the East. Huh! sneered the *State Register*, about the Republican plank on protecting Americans on the ocean; Lincoln would want to know the identical spot where they had been molested before he would act, just as he had done in the Mexican War.[3]

But two nominations for State Offices were to be made and these were quickly disposed of. Then came the nomination of Lincoln according to the plans which the managers had carefully made. A dramatic manœuvre prepared the way. The Chicago delegation brought in a banner inscribed 'COOK COUNTY IS FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN;' the crowd cheered wildly; a Peoria delegate moved that the motto be changed to 'ILLINOIS IS FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN;' hurrahs of approval 'fairly shook' the State House.[4] In this fashion the enemies of 'long John in Chicago thought

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 17, 1858. The plank on protection of Americans on the ocean was caused by general public anger at the seizure of American vessels by British ships in suppressing the African slave trade. Why not suppress Spain, asked the *New York Herald*, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, May 29, 1858.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 17, 1858.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 19, 1858.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 17, 1858; *Chicago Tribune*, June 18, 1858,

they had put a nail in his coffin . . . and . . . killed off his Senatorial aspirations,' remarked the *Chicago Times*, and added: 'We'll see if Long John is to be beaten or not.' [1] But the trick worked, and beaten Long John was.

After a formal endorsement of Trumbull was added to the platform, Charles L. Wilson submitted the following resolution which was greeted with shouts of approval and unanimously adopted:

'Resolved that Abraham Lincoln is the first and only choice of the Republicans of Illinois for the United States Senate, as the successor of Stephen A. Douglas.' [2] It was 'passed more for the object of closing down upon this everlasting croaking about Wentworth,' Lincoln modestly explained to Trumbull.[3] But 'EVERY MAN FOR LINCOLN,' was part of the caption over the story of the Convention printed in the leading anti-Wentworth paper.[4]

When the news reached Washington that Lincoln had been nominated, Douglas said to his close friend, John W. Forney: 'I shall have my hands full. He is the strong man of his party — full of wit, facts, dates — and the best stump speaker, with his droll ways and dry jokes, in the West. He is as honest as he is shrewd, and if I beat him my victory will be hardly won.' [5]

Seemingly to placate Greeley, some Republican who knew that Lincoln was to be nominated, wrote a long letter to the New York *Tribune*, the day before the Convention met. It stated that Lincoln had been made the Republican standard bearer, compared him with Douglas, and recounted their speeches at Springfield in 1854, all in disparagement of Douglas. Lincoln, of course, was highly praised and a valuable description given of his manner on the stump. 'Lincoln is colloquial, affable, good-natured, almost jolly. He states the case at issue with so much easy good humor and fairness that his opponents are almost persuaded he is not an opponent at all.' Yet all the time he is making a conclusive argument. 'Sometimes, for a single sen-

[1] *Chicago Daily Times*, June 22, 1858.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 17, 1858.

[3] Lincoln to Trumbull, Springfield, June 23, 1858. Tracy, 87–8.

[4] *Chicago Tribune*, Juue 18, 1858.

[5] *Anecdotes of Public Men:* John W. Forney, II, 179.

tence, he might seem to warm into eloquence, but it seemed only the leading of the subject, and not from any purpose to make a speech.' Decidedly, Lincoln, 'in the Senate, will be the right man in the right place.' [1]

After the platform was adopted and Lincoln nominated, the Convention, in great good humor, adjourned to eight o'clock that night. He then delivered his celebrated house-divided speech. Assured that the Convention would make him the Republican standard bearer, Lincoln had taken great pains to write out what he had to say. On envelopes and bits of paper he jotted down points when he thought of them and stored the scraps in his hat. Finally he transcribed these passages in consecutive order, 'carefully revising every line and sentence,' testifies Herndon. While thus at work on his speech, Dubois came into the office and asked Lincoln what he was writing: 'It's something you may see or hear some time,' he answered, 'but I'll not let you see it now.' [2]

When, at last, Lincoln got his speech in shape, he locked the office door, pulled the curtain across the glass panel, and read the production to the junior partner. As we have seen, Herndon was the radical influence in Lincoln's life, always urging him to take advanced stands against the advice of more cautious friends. '*I will do all I can to hold the leader's hands up*,' Herndon had written to Parker when Lincoln was preparing this very speech.[3]

At the end of each paragraph the prospective candidate paused for his partner's comment. When Lincoln read the first passage containing the celebrated Biblical quotation, Herndon remarked that it was true, of course, but was it 'wise or politic to say so?'

Gravely Lincoln made answer: 'that expression is a truth of all human experience, "a house divided against itself cannot

[1] Correspondence New York *Tribune* from Collinsville, Ill., June 15, 1858, in issue June 26, 1858.

[2] Herndon, II, 397.

[3] Herndon to Parker, Springfield, June 1, 1858. Newton, 164–5. Italics Herndon's. 'We, the Republicans, out here are comparing hands, seeing how we feel and stand, so that we may go into the "great battle" of 1858–9 in Illinois, between *Slavery and Freedom, Douglas and Lincoln, Democracy and Republicanism. . . . I will do all I can to hold the leader's hands up.*'

stand." . . . The proposition also is true, and has been for six thousand years. I want to use some universally known figure expressed in simple language as universally well-known, that may strike home to the minds of men in order to raise them up to the peril of the times. I do not believe I would be right in changing or omitting it. I would rather be defeated with this expression in the speech, and uphold and discuss it before the people, than be victorious without it.' [1]

A day or two before the Convention met, Lincoln asked several friends to go over the speech with him in the State Library, a usual precaution of candidates and of all wise public speakers. Not one approved, most objected, one predicted that it would drive former Democrats back to their old party, another said flatly that it was a 'damned fool utterance.' But Herndon 'held the leader's hands up,' as he had told Parker he would do: 'Lincoln, deliver that speech as read and it will make you President,' he exclaimed. Slowly Lincoln rose, and telling the group what 'intense thought' he had given to the whole subject, thus brought the conference to an end:

'Friends, this thing has been retarded long enough. The time has come when these sentiments should be uttered; and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to the truth — let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right.' [2]

When the expectant delegates and spectators again crowded Representatives Hall that night, Lincoln read his speech just as he had written it. Like Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, or Washington's Farewell Address, or Marshall's greatest opinions, Lincoln's speech contained nothing that had not been said often before. Time and again every idea had been expressed, sometimes in the same terms that Lincoln now made use of.

[1] Herndon, II, 398.

[2] *Ib.*, 399–400. One of the men present was Dr. William Jayne who, fifty years afterward, when over eighty years of age, gave substantially the same version of Lincoln's remarks that Herndon gave, but in pompous and verbose language. Jayne makes Lincoln repeat six verses of poetry, quote St. Paul, cite the example of Martin Luther, etc. The Jayne account is wholly unlike Lincoln's plain and simple manner of speaking at this period in his life and it is hard to imagine any politician boring a company of other politicians in a serious political conference with poetical recitations and unctuous sermonizing. *Abraham Lincoln;* William Jayne, 42–3, quoted in Newton, 171–2.

The opening sentence was a paraphrase of that spoken by Webster when beginning his second reply to Hayne, and other words of Webster's were employed in Lincoln's peroration. The proposition that the Nation could not exist half slave and half free had been stated hundreds of times in the press and on the stump, North and South alike. Lincoln himself frankly admitted that the idea had been impressed upon him by reading the editorials of the *Richmond Enquirer* already quoted.[1] The 'house divided' passage was a favorite Biblical quotation which he had repeated many years before. Moreover, those exact words, applied to slavery in the United States, had been in common use for at least half a century.[2] All the arguments against the Dred Scott decision had recently been made in various forms in the Senate.

But like Washington, Jefferson, and Marshall, Lincoln stated old truths in a simpler form than any one else had expressed them; like those masters, he stated them when the public mind was intent upon them and impressive numbers of men and women were ready to receive them; and he stated them as the chosen leader of a young, powerful and growing party in a great Western State at a critical time and as the opponent selected by that party to do battle with the then strongest political man in the Nation.

Thus Lincoln's speech, to which we now are to listen, had all

[1] *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 267.

[2] 'A house divided against itself cannot stand; neither can a government or Constitution: This is coincident with the present Chief Magistrate's [Jefferson's] opinion in his notes on the State of Virginia,' etc. *Remarks on the Slavery of the Black People:* John Parrish, Philadelphia, 1806.

'Our system of government rests on the broad basis of the people. . . . The people are not homogeneous, they do not assimilate; they are opposed in interests, at variance in opinion — they are at war, unavoidable war. . . . The cement is broken. The house is divided against itself,' etc. *The Rightful Remedy* [secession]: Edward B. Bryan, Charleston, S.C., 1850.

'The permanence of the Union is predicable only upon one of two conditions, either the South must put an end to slavery or the North must adopt it.' New York *Tribune*, 1854, as quoted in *Life of Charles A. Dana:* James H. Wilson, 129–30.

'Resolved, That a Church or Government which accords the same rights and privileges to Slavery as to Liberty, is a house divided against itself, which cannot stand.' Resolutions American Anti-Slavery Society, May 9, 1855. Garrison, III, 420.

For these citations I am indebted to Professor Ulrich B. Phillips of the University of Michigan. They are examples of great numbers of others in use long before the abolition movement became general up to the end of the Civil War.

the elements that make human utterance enduring. Had Webster not been in the Senate when Hayne made his attack on the Union, had that subject not then been emergent and vital, the grand eloquence of the Massachusetts orator would have been absurd. As a private citizen, Jefferson might have written a thousand Declarations at his home in Virginia, as many a man had done, but they never would have been heard of; as the draughtsman of the Continental Congress at the hour of Revolution, however, he wrote with the pen of history and undying fame.

So when the angular and homely clad Lincoln arose by the table in the Hall of the House of Representatives on that June night, and stood before the cheering multitude, he was the spokesman of a cause, and great events, still in the future, were to make his words historic. Lincoln read his speech,[1] slowly, with frequent emphasis on particular words, which he had carefully underscored in his manuscript. For some reason these italics, which Lincoln took great pains to keep in print when he read the proof and which were printed in the *Illinois State Journal* just as Lincoln had inserted them, are left out of his published works. He also made his paragraphs very short, often of but one sentence, and even these sentences, sometimes of only six words, each of one syllable.[2] Let us, then, follow Lincoln's speech as he delivered it and as it was published, under his direction, in the Republican organ at Springfield.

'If we could first know *where* we are, and *whither* we are tending, we could then better judge *what* to do, and *how* to do it,' began Lincoln with, for him, unwonted gravity.

'We are now far into the *fifth* year, since a policy was initiated, with the *avowed* object, and *confident* promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation.[3]

[1] Horace White, in Herndon and Weik, second edition, II, 92. 'I sat at a short distance from Mr. Lincoln when he delivered . . . the speech. . . . This was delivered from manuscript, and was the only one I ever heard him deliver in that way.'

White, then twenty-four years old, was on the *Chicago Tribune* which had sent him to write up the Springfield Convention. He was assigned to go with Lincoln throughout the campaign, and it is to Mr. White's narrative, written many years afterward but from notes taken at the time, that we owe the fairest account given by a spectator.

[2] In all *Works* of Lincoln these small paragraphs are combined into long ones.

[3] Webster's first sentence of his reply to Hayne is: 'When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of

'Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only, *not ceased*, but has *constantly augmented*.

'In *my* opinion, it *will* not cease, until a *crisis* shall have been reached, and passed ——

'"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

'I believe this government cannot endure; permanently half *slave* and half *free*.

'I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved* — I do [no]t expect the house to *fall* — but I *do* expect it will cease to be divided.

'It will become *all* one thing, or *all* the other.

'Either the *opponents* of slavery, will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction; or its *advocates* will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in *all* the States, *old* as well as *new* — *North* as well as *South*.

'Have we no *tendency* to the latter condition?'

With this foundation of enquiry laid, Lincoln went on to argue that, from the repeal of the Missouri Compromise up to and including the Dred Scott decision and Buchanan's present Kansas policy, every Democratic measure had been a part of a plan devised long before these attempts were made to carry it out — all constituted a smoothly working 'piece of *machinery*': could any one fail 'to trace the evidences of design, and concert of action, among its chief bosses, from the beginning.'

First came the doctrine of the '*sacred right of self government*' by which the Kansas-Nebraska Act was justified, which doctrine in that case meant no more than this: 'That if any *one* man choose to enslave *another*, no *third* man shall be allowed to object.' That was proved, said Lincoln, by the fate of an amendment offered in the Senate to make specific the language in which the principle of popular sovereignty was stated in the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

That language was: '*It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, not exclude it therefrom; but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.*' Yet an

the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course.' *Writings:* VI, 3,

amendment that the people might exclude slavery had been beaten by the friends of the bill.[1]

At the very time that the Kansas-Nebraska bill was 'passing' through Congress at Washington, Lincoln continued, the Dred Scott case was 'passing' through the Federal Court at St. Louis; and 'both Nebraska bill and law suit were brought to a decision in the same month of May, 1854.' Lincoln then proceeded to make the usual Republican argument to which we have listened, but he made it in plainer terms. The argument in the Supreme Court before the Presidential election; the postponement of the decision until after that event, so that the victory of Buchanan could be claimed as an endorsement of the misused principle of popular sovereignty; the assertion of Douglas in the Senate in answer to a question by Trumbull, that the Supreme Court must decide whether the people of a Territory could prohibit slavery; the repeated assertion of Pierce in his last message to Congress that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional (an assertion which, as we have seen, Lincoln ignored when making answer to Pierce at the time); the ordering of a reargument of the Dred Scott case after Buchanan's election; the exhortation by the new President in his inaugural for 'the people to abide by the forthcoming decision, *whatever it might be;*' the decision itself; Douglas's quick endorsement of it following that of the President; Douglas's declaration, in the course of his 'squabble' with Buchanan over the Lecompton Constitution,

[1] This was the famous Chase amendment to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It was a purely political manœuvre, as amendments to bills often are, designed to make 'records' for campaign uses and put the other party, seemingly, in the wrong. Senator Pearce of Maryland instantly offered to amend Chase's amendment so as to permit the people to admit or reject slavery as they saw fit, thus making it 'perfectly fair,' as Pearce said, and consistent with the language of the bill.

But the parliamentary situation was such that the proposal of a further amendment to an amendment could not be received; Chase had taken advantage of that fact, a permissible feint and one made use of constantly at the present day; and in this state of things in the Senate, Chase's amendment was, of course, voted down. Undoubtedly it would have been defeated anyway, as hostile amendments from the opposing party always are rejected by the party proposing a bill and responsible for it, especially if it is a 'party measure.'

Chase knew that his amendment would suffer this usual fate, but he also knew that the defeat of it would make 'a record' from which party appeals could be make in the press and on the stump. This took place, and we shall hear Lincoln made frequent use of the incident in his debates with Douglas. It is for this reason that this explanation is given, since on its merits, the whole matter does not deserve a word of comment.

'that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he *cares* not whether slavery be voted *down* or voted *up*.'

There you have it: 'The several points of the Dred Scott decision, in connection with Senator Douglas's "care not" policy, constitute the piece of machinery, in its *present* state of advancement.' Lincoln then described what he called 'the *working* points of that machinery:' the decision that a negro could not be a '*citizen*' of any State, made for the purpose of depriving him of the constitutional guarantee that 'the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States;' the decision that slavery could not be kept out of the Territories, made for the purpose of enabling slaveholders to '*fill up* the territories with slaves, . . . and thus to enhance the chances of *permanency* to the institution through all the future;' the refusal to decide whether residence in a free State made a slave free, and whether the decision that such questions must be determined by 'the courts of any slave State the negro may be forced into by the master.'

Why that curious ruling? Lincoln thus explained the hidden purposes of it: 'This point is made, not to be pressed *immediately;* but, if acquiesced in for a while, and apparently *indorsed* by the people at an election, *then* to sustain the logical conclusion that what Dred Scott's master might lawfully do with Dred Scott, in the free State of Illinois, every other master may lawfully do with any other *one*, or one *thousand* slaves, in Illinois, or in any other free State.'

And the people were to be led to agree to just that: the plot was to make use of 'the Nebraska doctrine, or what is left of it, . . . to *educate* and *mould* public opinion, at least *Northern* public opinion, to not *care* whether slavery is voted *down* or voted *up*.

'This shows exactly where we now *are;* and *partially* also, whither we are tending.'

With the emphasis of brief reiteration which only the artist of public speech can employ with good effect, Lincoln asked his hearers to review again 'the string of historical facts already stated. Several things will *now* appear less *dark* and *mysterious* than they did *when* they were transpiring.'

Take, for instance, the doctrine that 'the people were to be

left "perfectly free [to form and regulate their domestic institutions] subject only to the Constitution." What the *Constitution* had to do with it, outsiders could not *then* see. Plainly enough *now*, it was an exactly fitted *nitch*, for the Dred Scott decision to afterwards come in, and declare that *perfect freedom* of the people, to be just no freedom at all.'

All could now see why the Chase amendment had been voted down. 'Plainly enough *now*, the adoption of it, would have spoiled the nitch for the Dred Scott decision.' Lincoln was here making a popular appeal, of course, not a legal argument, since the adoption of the Chase amendment could not have prevented the Supreme Court from deciding the Dred Scott case as it did.

'Why was the court decision held up . . . till *after* the Presidential election?' continued Lincoln. 'Plainly enough *now*, the speaking out *then* would have damaged the "*perfectly free*" argument upon which the election was to be carried.'

Pierce's endorsement of the decision long before its delivery, the delay of the reargument, Buchanan's '*advance* exhortation' — these things, said Lincoln, '*look* like the cautious *patting* and *petting* a spirited horse, preparatory to mounting him, when it is dreaded that he may give the rider a fall.'

Here was a comparison that the farmers of Illinois could understand, and Lincoln now gave another which they and everybody else could understand. No more adroit appeal to the popular mind could be made, and this fact, together with the subject, the occasion, and Lincoln's post-war fame, have given this passage a place in literature:

'We can not absolutely *know* that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen — Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James, for instance [1] — and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few — not omitting even scaffolding — or, if a

[1] Douglas, Pierce, Taney, and Buchanan.

single piece be lacking, we can see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared to yet bring such piece in — in *such* a case, we find it impossible to not *believe* that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common *plan* or *draft* drawn up before the first lick was struck.'

In the debates, we shall hear how Douglas made answer to this seemingly unanswerable reasoning.

Was there a place in the frame for another piece of timber? Of course — the Kansas-Nebraska Act said that 'the people of a *State* as well as *Territory*, were to be left "*perfectly free . . . subject only to the Constitution.*"'

'Why mention a *State*?' asked Lincoln. 'They were legislating for *territories*, and not *for* or *about* States. Certainly the people of a *State* are and *ought to be* subject to the Constitution of the United States; but why is mention of this *lugged* into this merely *territorial* law? Why are the people of a *territory* and the people of a *state* therein *lumped* together, and their relation to the Constitution therein treated as being *precisely* the same?

'While the opinion of *the Court*, by Chief Justice Taney, in the Dred Scott case, and the separate opinions of all the concurring Judges, expressly declare that the Constitution of the United States neither permits Congress nor a Territorial legislature to exclude slavery from any United States territory, they all *omit* to declare whether or not the same Constitution permits a *state*, or the people of a State, to exclude it. . . .

'In what *cases* the power of the *states is so* restrained by the U.S. Constitution is left an *open* question, precisely as the same question, as to the restraint on the power of the *territories*, was left open in the Nebraska act. Put *that* and *that* together, and we have another nice little nitch, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision, declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a *state* to exclude slavery from its limits.

'And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of "care not whether slavery be voted *down*, or voted *up*," shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made.'

In short, according to Lincoln, the Supreme Court stood ready to make another Dred Scott decision to extend slavery into the free States, when it should be thought safe to do so. The contention that such a decision would be rendered, forbidding States to exclude slavery, was a favorite point with Lincoln, and we shall hear him make it over and over in his debate with Douglas and hear Douglas's repeated reply to it.

'Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States,' Lincoln continued.

'Welcome or unwelcome, such decision *is* probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown.

'We shall *lie down* pleasantly dreaming that the people of *Missouri* are on the verge of making their State *free;* and we shall *awake* to the *reality*, instead, that the *Supreme* Court has made *Illinois* a *slave* State.

'To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty, is the work now before all those who would prevent consummation.

'That is *what* we have to do.

'But *how* can we best do it?'

Thus, at last, Lincoln reached the point from which he could logically attack Douglas directly and by name. Throughout he had intimated that his opponent was the chief devil, but now he could unmask him. In doing so, he made use of the device, sometimes adopted by lawyers to minimize the arguments of opposing counsel by overpraising that counsel and depreciating himself, thus inclining the jury to favor him — a method that Lincoln is to employ throughout his debates with Douglas. This part of Lincoln's speech must be given in his own words:

'There are those who denounce us *openly* to their *own* friends, and yet whisper *us softly*, that *Senator Douglas* is the *aptest* instrument there is, with which to effect that object. *They* do *not* tell us, nor has *he* told us, that he *wishes* any such object to be effected. They wish us to *infer* all, from the fact that he now has a little quarrel with the present head of the dynasty; and that he has regularly voted with us, on a single point, upon which, he and we have never differed.

'They remind us that *he* is a very *great man*, and that the

largest of *us* are very small ones. Let this be granted. But "a *living dog* is better than a *dead lion*." Judge Douglas, if not a *dead* lion *for this work*, is at least a *caged* and *toothless* one. How can he oppose the advances of slavery? He don't *care* anything about it. His avowed *mission is impressing* the "public heart" to *care* nothing about it.

'A leading Douglas Democratic newspaper thinks Douglas' superior talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African slave trade.

'Does Douglas believe an effort to revive that trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he *really* think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he has labored to prove it a *sacred right* of white men to take negro slaves into the new territories. Can he possibly show that it is *less* a sacred right to *buy* them where they can be bought cheapest? And, unquestionably they can be bought *cheaper in Africa* than in *Virginia*.

'He had done all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere *right of property;* and as such, how can *he* oppose the foreign slave trade — how can he refuse that trade in that "property" shall be "perfectly free" — unless he does it as a *protection* to the home production? And as the home *producers* will probably not *ask* the protection, he will be wholly without a ground of opposition.

'Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be *wiser to-day* than [he] was *yesterday* — that he may rightfully *change* when he finds himself wrong.

'But, can we for that reason, run ahead, and *infer* that he *will* make any particular change, of which he, himself, has given no intimation? Can we *safely* base *our* action upon any such *vague* inference?

'Now, as ever, I wish to not *misrepresent* Judge Douglas' *position*, question his *motives*, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him.

'Whenever, *if ever*, he and we can come together on *principle* so that *our great cause* may have assistance from *his great ability*, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle.

'But clearly, he is not *now* with us — he does not *pretend* to be — he does not *promise* to *ever* be.

'Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by its own undoubted friends — those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work — who *do care* for the result.

'Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong.

'We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us.

'Of *strange*, *discordant*, and even, *hostile* elements, we gathered from the four winds, and *formed* and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy.

'Did we brave all *then* to *falter* now? — *now* — when that same enemy is *wavering*, dissevered and belligerent? [1]

'The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail — if we stand firm, we shall not fail.

'*Wise councils* may *accelerate* or *mistakes delay* it, but, sooner or later the victory is *sure* to come.' [2]

Other speakers followed and the convention adjourned amid the 'wildest enthusiasm.' [3] Lincoln gave his manuscript to young White and asked him to read the proof of it at the *State Journal* office where it was already in type. While the youthful reporter was at the task, Lincoln 'came into the composing room . . . and looked over the revised proofs,' White relates. 'He said to me that he had taken a great deal of pains with this speech, and that he wanted it to go before the people just as he had prepared it. He added that some of his friends had scolded him a good deal about the opening paragraph and the "house divided against itself," and wanted him to change it or leave it out altogether, but that he believed he had studied this subject more deeply than they had, and that he was going to stick to that text, whatever happened.' [4]

[1] The famous sentence in Webster's peroration is: 'When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on . . . States dissevered, discordant, belligerent.'

Lincoln's application of this to the Democratic factions in Illinois accurately stated the situation, notwithstanding his use of the seemingly inconsistent words 'wavering' and 'belligerent,' a fact which fully answers the criticism that those words convey antagonistic ideas.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 18, 1858. All italics Lincoln's.

[3] Koerner, II, 58–9.

[4] White, in Herndon and Weik, 2nd edition, II, 92.

The larger Republican papers of Illinois printed Lincoln's speech in full; smaller ones published the most striking passages from it. The Republican State Committee circulated it in pamphlet form where it would do most good. Here and there a country editor got out a pocket edition of it.[1] The *Chicago Tribune*[2] called it 'masterly,' 'statesmanlike,' 'the ground work of the campaign,' and praised Lincoln's 'dignified and gentlemanly bearing towards Mr. Douglas.' Even Parker was pleased with Lincoln — his speech was 'admirable' and he would win, for Douglas was now 'neither Republican nor Democrat.'[3]

Under the caption, REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES, the New York *Tribune*[4] reproduced the whole speech with a brief editorial of cordial praise — it was 'compact and forcible,' 'concise and admirable,' and 'one of his best efforts.'[5] Thereafter, Greeley ceased to urge Illinois Republicans to support Douglas — indeed, he had stopped doing so a fortnight before the meeting of the Republican State Convention at Springfield. Herndon had sent Greeley scolding letters of protest. 'Paddle your own dugout,' exclaimed the New York editor at the end of a sharp note in reply.[6] But other papers outside Illinois paid little or no attention to Lincoln's speech.[7] It was, however, his most important move in the game for the Presidency, a game Lincoln meant to win.[8]

The Douglas press scoffed at Lincoln's speech: how like Lincoln to call Douglas a '*dead lion*,' and himself a '*living dog*' — and how appropriate that term as applied to himself, for, in Congress, had he not won and earned a dog's name 'Spot'?[9] 'To kill a *dead* lion, all the "living dogs" of Illinois have been let loose with sharpened fangs. To fight a "toothless" lion, all the

[1] For instance: Orville P. Bassett, publisher of the *True Republican*, Sycamore, Ill. A copy, probably unique, is in the Barrett Collection.

[2] June 19, 1858.

[3] Parker to Herndon, July 1, 1858. Newton, 177–8.

[4] June 24, 1858. [5] New York *Tribune*, June 24, 1858.

[6] Greeley to Herndon, New York, May 29, 1858. Newton, 164.

[7] Yet the New York correspondent of the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, in a partisan letter against Douglas, July 2, 1858, said that Lincoln's speech had been 'extensively published here and has commanded unqualified admiration.'

[8] 'While, however, his political friends were training him for the Senate he was coaching himself for the Presidency, two years thereafter.' *Lincoln:* Whitney, I, 266.

[9] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 1, 1858, quoting *Chicago Times*.

living dogs from Cairo to Chicago have been lashed and whipped into the hunt.' Was it a dead or a toothless lion that had attacked and beaten the Administration with all its patronage, backed by 'a proud and overbearing majority in both houses of Congress.' [1]

In even stronger and much graver terms Democratic editors denounced the speech as little short of treason, since, said they, it meant war. Throughout the campaign they made fun of Lincoln's comparison of Douglas and himself as a 'dead lion' and a 'living dog.' [2]

Wentworth's paper declared that all Douglas expected to accomplish was to cause a deadlock in the Legislature and throw the election over for two years, and said that the battlefield would be Central Illinois.[3]

Thus was the Republican campaign in that State formally opened, and we shall now see Lincoln, in his fiftieth year, make the first great fight of his life.

[1] *Chicago Daily Times*, June 23, 1858.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 28, 1858, and succeeding issues of that and other papers.

[3] *Chicago Daily Democrat*, June 18, 1858. 'The Republicans will sweep the North. The Democrats will sweep the South. Douglas hopes to get his balance of power in the centre of the State. He had made up his mind that the Republicans will help the Democrats in the South, and the Democrats will help the Republicans in the North, and that his only chance is to hold the balance of power, and throw the election over.'

CHAPTER IX

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN

The issues between Mr. Lincoln and myself, as respective candidates for the U.S. Senate, as made up, are direct, unequivocal, and irreconcilable. He goes for uniformity in our domestic institutions, for a war of sections, until one or the other shall be subdued. I go for the great principle of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, the right of the people to decide for themselves. DOUGLAS at Chicago, July 9, 1858.

Let us discard all this quibbling about this man and the other man, this race and that race and the other race being inferior, and therefore they must be placed in an inferior position. Let us discard all these things, and unite as one people throughout this land, until we shall once more stand up declaring that all men are created equal. LINCOLN at Chicago, July 10, 1858.

PROMPTLY Douglas sounded his call to the colors. His postmaster at Chicago had been removed and a former occupant, Isaac Cook, put in his place. Cook, once a Douglas man, was a strong local politician who had not been reappointed because of shortage in his accounts.[1] The *Chicago Times*[2] printed the details of the defalcation, and, on the Senate floor, Douglas denounced him; but he was confirmed, and, with the two United States Marshals, managed the fight of the 'regular Democracy' or 'National Democracy' against Douglas. All other Federal officeholders who stood by the President and thus kept their places, together with the scores of those who had been appointed to offices from which Douglas men had been ousted, joined in the assault on the great party insurgent.[3]

Most active and resourceful of these was the special agent of the Post Office Department, who was also superintendent of mails, postmasters, and route agents in Illinois, Dr. Charles Leib, a Democratic clerk in the last session of the Illinois House of Representatives. He was appointed in the place of James Ward, who was removed because he would not desert Douglas, and Leib at once wired to the Republican Secretary of State:

[1] *Chicago Times*, March 9, 1858.

[2] *Ib.*, March 21, 1858. When news of Cook's appointment reached Chicago, the editor of the *Times* wrote the editor of the *Illinois State Register* that the 'town is upside down, and *if Douglas does not* . . . fight the nomination then, he for one, would cease to respect him.' James W. Sheahan, Chicago, to Lanphier, Feb. 19, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

[3] Sheahan, 385–90.

'I have Ward's place.' [1] Travelling on railroad passes, Leib was constantly going from place to place, coördinating the Administration forces, threatening removals, promising appointments and stirring up trouble for Douglas in every way.[2]

Moreover, he was a go-between for the 'regular Democrats' and the Republican leaders, and faithfully reported to Trumbull in Washington the progress of the fight. That Leib also told the Republican State Chairman what he was doing is certain, although this cannot be proved by written evidence, since Judd's papers have been destroyed. Of all this coöperation, however, Lincoln was in total ignorance, for we shall hear him say so time and again.

The Administration agent also conferred with local Republican editors and workers. Of this we have direct and positive proof. Delahay wrote a revealing account of one such conversation. 'Last night with Brown,[3] English,[4] and *Leib* (*Mail agent*) I spent several hours; *Leib* is drilling the faithful, and I of late, have made a few speaches, sort of Douglass, speaches. *Lincoln* and I went out to Edwardsville Tuesday together. Lincoln made a fine Republican speach. My speach did not please the Republicans, [but] by Brown and Lincoln, it was understood what I should say beforehand; my policy is to back up Douglass until after the Buckhanan convention nominate their *state* ticket, then I am for Lincoln.' [5]

[1] Leib to Hatch or Dubois (Republican State Auditor), March 2, 1858. *Chicago Daily Times*, March 7, 1858.

[2] When Leib was appointed to the place of a Douglas man, removed, Thos. L. Harris, Democratic Representative in the House from the Springfield District, wrote to the editor of the *Illinois State Register:* 'I hope the first time he gets into the State he will be tarred and feathered and sent out of it, down the Mississippi on a raft.' Harris to Lanphier ('Dear Charlie'), Washington, Feb. 27, 1858. Lanphier MSS. And see *Chicago Daily Times*, March 3, 1858.

[3] George T. Brown, Republican, editor of the *Alton Courier*.

[4] A local politician.

[5] M. W. Delahay, Alton, to Trumbull, May 22, 1858. Trumbull MSS. Of this incident Professor Cole says: 'Certain radical "black republicans" found endorsement of Douglas to be a valuable expedient to prevent the Buchanan men from harmonizing with the Douglas wing. M. W. Delahay, an Alton radical who bitterly hated Douglas, went on the stump for the "little giant" with the understanding of Lincoln and the republicans; he remained in the field until the Buchanan convention nominated its state ticket; then, according to arrangement, he came out for Lincoln.' *Era:* Cole, 166.

By far the best short account of the campaign of 1858 in Illinois is that of Professor

Indeed, unless human nature did not function within the Republican organization and unless the Republican managers refrained altogether from the usual campaign practices during the whole of the contest of 1858, there can be no doubt, that in order to beat Douglas, the Administration leaders and the Republican State Committee were in close touch from first to last.[1]

Therefore just before he left Washington to take the field in Illinois, Douglas rose in his place in the Senate and, with a boldness harsh even for him, denounced what he called the plot against him. He alleged that the purpose of it was to divide the Democratic Party in Illinois and elect Republicans to all offices including that of United States Senator. Leib, especially, was held up to execration and scorn. He had been a member of Lane's secret armed band of 'Danites' in Kansas, and, in 1856, had told Douglas that he once was 'grand paymaster' of that order, begging Douglas to overlook the fact (Leib was then seeking an appointment as a Democrat). This was that very organization which the Little Giant had 'exposed' in his report on Kansas, made to the Senate that year. And now, Douglas said, he found himself faced by 'an unscrupulous coalition' of Republicans and 'Danite' Democrats, the most active agent of which was this same Leib. Trumbull denied it — Leib 'is no man of ours,' he said.[2]

Cole, in Chapter VII of his brilliant volume. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that Professor Cole's narrative is the only impartial treatment of the subject.

[1] When Leib secured this appointment early in 1858, the editor of the *Chicago Times* wrote to Lanphier: 'The object of this is to build up an anti-Douglas party and Leib is to be a travelling incendiary stirring up postmasters, etc. . . . We have a hard fight on hand; I do not know what the result will be.' James W. Sheahan, Chicago, to Lanphier, Feb. 4, 1858. Lanphier MSS.

'*That which is likely to defeat the Republican partisans is the coalition between them and the Lecompton office-holders.* The people will have none of that.' *Cincinnati Commercial* (Rep.) 'We know that all the federal office-holders of Illinois . . . boast that they have made an alliance with the Republicans,' etc. Comment of the *Chicago Daily Times*, May 25, 1858. Italics *Times'*.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. III, 3055–8. June 15, 1858. The *Illinois Daily State Register*, June 25, 1858, and other Douglas papers printed this speech in full. It was fine Douglas campaign material.

'I will charge the alliance, and I will prove the alliance. Yes, I could here, in the Senate, if I could make witnesses speak, prove that this man, Leib, went to the other side [Republican] of the Chamber, and appealed to them to vote for the confirmation of a certain officer in Illinois, in order to help the Republicans beat Douglas.' *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. III, 3058. June 15, 1858.

Neither Trumbull, nor any other Republican Senator, made denial. See political report of Leib to Trumbull *infra*.

In alarm, Trumbull wrote to Lincoln of Douglas's charge. 'We had already seen, by telegraph, a report of Douglas' general onslaught upon everybody but himself,' Lincoln made answer. He reassured Trumbull, saying that there was no 'alliance between the Republicans and Buchanan men in this State,' unless pleasure at the Democratic split and doing nothing to prevent it, could be called so; but there had been no bargain of any kind.[1] Obviously, however, Lincoln was perturbed, for he read this letter to his junior partner, and Herndon promptly wrote to Trumbull also:

'I adopt all he [Lincoln] said. . . . I know of no such contract finished, commenced or in embryo. I think I would know it . . . probably sooner and better than Lincoln, for you know he does not know the details of how we get along. I do, but he does not. That kind of thing does not suit his tastes, nor does it suit me, yet I am compelled to do it — do it because I cannot get rid of it.'[2] Strange man was the junior partner and indispensable to Lincoln's progress — friend of Parker, Phillips, and the Eastern radicals, and associate of Illinois Abolitionists, and yet drill sergeant of 'the wild boys about town;'[3] also the member of the firm who had to do things he did not like but could not 'get rid of.' Old Onstot's cryptic statement, that Lincoln had 'reasons' for making Herndon his partner, was not without meaning.

At any rate, the Democratic quarrel gave Lincoln his chief hope. Writing at the time, Herndon testifies: 'Mr. Lincoln was here a moment or so since, and he told me that he had just seen Col. Dougherty [Administration Democratic candidate for State Treasurer], and had a conversation with him. He told Lincoln that the National Democracy intended "to run in every County and District a National Democrat for each and every office." Lincoln replied to this by saying — "If you do this the thing is settled — the battle is fought." This you may depend upon,' Herndon assured Trumbull.[4]

[1] Lincoln, Springfield, to Trumbull, June 23, 1858. Tracy, 87.

[2] Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, June 24, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] See Chap. VIII, Vol. I, of this work.

[4] Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, July 8, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

The Administration Democrats were in desperate earnest, — 'the split widens and deepens daily: . . . *I know*,' Herndon goes on, because 'my position — remember where

'Mr. Douglas has tremendous odds against him,' said the New York *Times*. 'If Mr. Douglas shall succeed in detaching from the Administration Democrats enough to elect him, it will be the most brilliant triumph of his life.' [1] And a Republican paper of Cincinnati declared that the 'critical position' of Douglas made his fight for reëlection desperate and fateful.[2]

His denunciation of the 'alliance' made, Douglas started for Chicago, stopping in New York on the way in order to raise campaign funds from Tammany, the Republicans said,[3] and to arrange with Seward for help in return for Douglas's support of the New York Senator for President — campaign canards without the faintest evidence to support them, and of interest only because they were two of the many stories told against Douglas in the historic fight between him and Lincoln now at hand. Scenes on his trip to the West were the reverse of those of four years earlier. Everywhere the people now begged to see and hear him. His entry into Chicago was a triumph. All press correspondents reported it in highly colored language. He was received 'like a conquering hero,' wrote one of the most trustworthy and moderate of them.[4]

A Committee of Douglas Democrats met him at Michigan City, Indiana, and at every stop from that place to Chicago Douglas received an ovation. Newspaper men were hard put to it to find words to describe the demonstration at that city. The Republican press tried to belittle it, but grudgingly admitted its success, albeit it was all 'cooked up,' they said. Six horses drew the carriage in which Douglas rode from the station to the

my father and Bro[ther] stand — is such that I know what I am talking about.' Trumbull MSS. Herndon's father and brother were strong Buchanan men.

[1] New York *Times*, July 13, 1858.

[2] *Cincinnati Commercial*, July 6, 1858.

[3] In the heat of the campaign, the *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 10, 1858, charged that about three weeks before a Douglas emissary got a promise from Tammany to contribute $50,000 to his campaign fund. This charge must be considered with relation to the results of the panic and the frenzy of the campaign. Absurd as it was, the story was thought to be effective political ammunition at a time when both parties considered any tale legitimate that might hurt the other side.

[4] Henry Villard, correspondent *New York Staats-Zeitung*. *Memoirs of Henry Villard*, I, 92. Young Villard also sent letters gratuitously to the *Philadelphia Press* throughout the Lincoln-Douglas campaign. *Ib.*, 91 *n.* Villard was twenty-three years old at this time.

Tremont House. The streets were so densely packed that way could be made but slowly through the throngs. The roar of cannon was unbroken. Continuous cheers arose. Frenzied men strove to reach the carriage and shake Douglas's hand. From the windows 'fair ladies' waved handkerchiefs, and their voices mingled with the deeper roars of welcome. 'Chicago has never before witnessed such a sight.' [1] The fighting spirit among his followers was aroused, for Douglas, the fighter, had come home to lead them.

In spite of the self-suppression of his opinion after the Illinois Republicans had rejected his advice, Greeley could not restrain his pen when the telegraph flashed to New York descriptions of Douglas's reception. 'The vast assemblage . . . was a well deserved' tribute to Douglas: if expediency had influenced him to fight the Administration and its Kansas policy, he had displayed 'rare and profound sagacity;' while if he had been inspired by principle he had earned still higher praise. In any case, the sole credit would be due to Douglas if the Democratic party was saved from utter wreck.[2]

When Douglas stepped on to the balcony of the hotel to make his speech, more than twelve thousand people stood before him in the street below — the Douglas papers said thirty thousand.[3] Again and again the cheering broke out. Douglas asked for quiet. Finally he began. He was very tired and he spoke without written preparation or even notes.

Such a reception, 'so great in numbers that no human voice can be heard to its countless thousands,' was the public endorsement of a great principle and not a tribute to him, said Douglas. '[Voices, "It is!" "You have deserved it," and great applause.]' No! he exclaimed; 'It is an expression of your devotion to that great principle of self-government [cries of "hear," "hear"] to which my life for many years past has been and in the whole future will be devoted. [Immense cheering.]'

Douglas said that he had fought the Lecompton Constitution,

[1] *Chicago Times*, July 10, 1858, as quoted in Sheahan, 398–400.

[2] New York *Tribune*, July 12, 1858, clipped in *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 21, 1858.

[3] Estimate of *Chicago Times*, July 10, 1858, and *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 12, 1858.

because it violated that principle, and, with others, he had 'forced them' to send it back to Kansas to be voted on by the people next August. So that subject was now out of the way. '[Immense applause.]' Senator Crittenden, some 'glorious Americans and old line whigs from the south,' and the Republicans had joined him in the fight and deserved as much credit as he. He had defended the principle of popular sovereignty right there in Chicago in the face of 'great dissatisfaction, [Shame! Shame!]' and the Legislature, chosen immediately thereafter, had endorsed that principle. Had he not done his duty in fighting for that same principle again? '[Cries of "yes!" "yes!" and cheers.]' In the Senate he had once fought for it against opposition from the North, and recently against resistance from the South. '[Cheers.]' Everywhere he had pledged himself to do that; 'Have I not redeemed that pledge? [cries of "yes!" "yes!" and three tremendous cheers.]'

He wished to be frank, Douglas said. He had attacked the Lecompton constitution not because it had slavery in it, but solely because the whole instrument was not to be submitted to the people. It would have been the same had a free State plan been offered in the same way. 'I deny their [Congress] right to force a good thing upon a people who are unwilling to receive it [cries of "good!" "good!" and cheers].' That was the meaning of popular sovereignty.

It is 'the great principle upon which all our institutions rest. It is no answer to this argument to say that slavery is an evil and hence should not be tolerated. . . . You allow them [the people] to decide for themselves whether they desire a Maine liquor law or not; . . . what kind of common schools they will have; . . . the relations between husband and wife parent and child, and guardian and ward; in fact, . . . all other questions, and why not upon this question? [Cheers.]'

Here Douglas went out of his way to compliment Lincoln. 'I take great pleasure in saying that I have known personally and intimately, for about a quarter of a century, the worthy gentleman who has been nominated for my place [A voice, "He will never get it" and cheers], and I will say that I regard him as a kind, amiable, an intelligent gentleman, a good citizen and an

honorable opponent; and whatever issue I may have with him will be of principle and not involving personalities. [Cheers.]'

Lincoln's 'well prepared and carefully written' speech before the Springfield Convention stated two distinct propositions, upon which 'I shall take a direct and bold issue with him [great applause].' Consider the first, 'scripture quotations and all [Laughter],' the denial that the Nation could endure half slave and half free. That meant uniformity in local laws and domestic institutions of all the States, said Douglas. Thus Lincoln invited ceaseless conflict until slavery should be established or abolished everywhere — 'a war of sections, a war of the North against the South, of the free States against the slave States — a war of extermination to be continued relentlessly, until the one or the other shall be subdued and all the States shall either become free or become slave.' For that was what it would come to in the end.

Such uniformity was neither possible nor desirable. The founders of the Nation knew that what would suit one section would not do for another; and so they provided that each State should be sovereign over its domestic affairs, and the general Government should exercise only 'specified powers which were general and national. [Cheers.]'

That was the 'fundamental principle' of our complex State and Federal system, asserted Douglas, and 'my friend, Mr. Lincoln, has totally misapprehended' it. In politics, in religion, in industry, in all the activities and conduct of life, 'uniformity is the parent of despotism the world over;' apply it and 'you have destroyed the greatest safeguard which our institutions have thrown around the rights of the citizen. ["Bravo," and great applause.]'

How could such uniformity be had? Only by 'merging the rights and sovereignty of the States in one consolidated empire, and vesting congress with the plenary power to make all the police regulations, domestic and local laws, uniform throughout the limits of the republic.'

When that shall have been done, prophesied Douglas, 'then the states will all be slave or all be free; then negroes will vote everywhere or nowhere; then you will have a Maine liquor law

[prohibition] in every state or none; then you will have uniformity in all things local and domestic by the authority of the federal government. But, when you attain that uniformity you will have converted these thirty-two sovereign, independent states into one consolidated empire, with the uniformity of despotism reigning triumphant throughout the length and breadth of the land. ["hear," "hear," "bravo," and great applause.]'

Variety in local regulations and domestic institutions was vital to liberty, insisted Douglas. If freedom was to be preserved, the sovereignty of the States must be maintained.

Douglas said that he took 'direct issue' with Lincoln's attack upon the Supreme Court. Under the American system it was the duty of the Courts to expound the Constitution and construe the laws; and when the decision of a case was made, all must yield to it. '[Cheers.]' Upon that principle 'our rights, and our liberty, and our property all depend. . . . I have no idea of appealing from the decision of the supreme court upon a constitutional question to the decision of a tumultuous town meeting. [Cheers.]'

A Chicago lawyer once advocated appeals from the State Supreme Court to two Justices of the Peace. '[Great Laughter and applause.] My friend, Mr. Lincoln, who sits behind me reminds me that that proposition was made when I was a Judge of the Supreme Court. Be that as it may, I do not think that fact adds any greater weight or authority to the suggestion. [Renewed laughter and applause.] It matters not with me who was on the bench, whether Mr. Lincoln or myself, whether a Lockwood or a Smith,[1] a Taney or a Marshall; the decision of the highest tribunal known to the Constitution of the Country must be final until it is reversed by an equally high authority. [Cries of "bravo" and applause.]

'Hence I am opposed to this doctrine of Mr. Lincoln, by which he proposes to take an appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States upon these high constitutional questions, to a republican caucus sitting in the country [A voice — "call it Freesoil," and cheers.] Yes, or to any other caucus or

[1] See Vol. I, 177, 295, of this work.

town meeting, whether it be Republican, American, or Democratic. [Cheers.]'

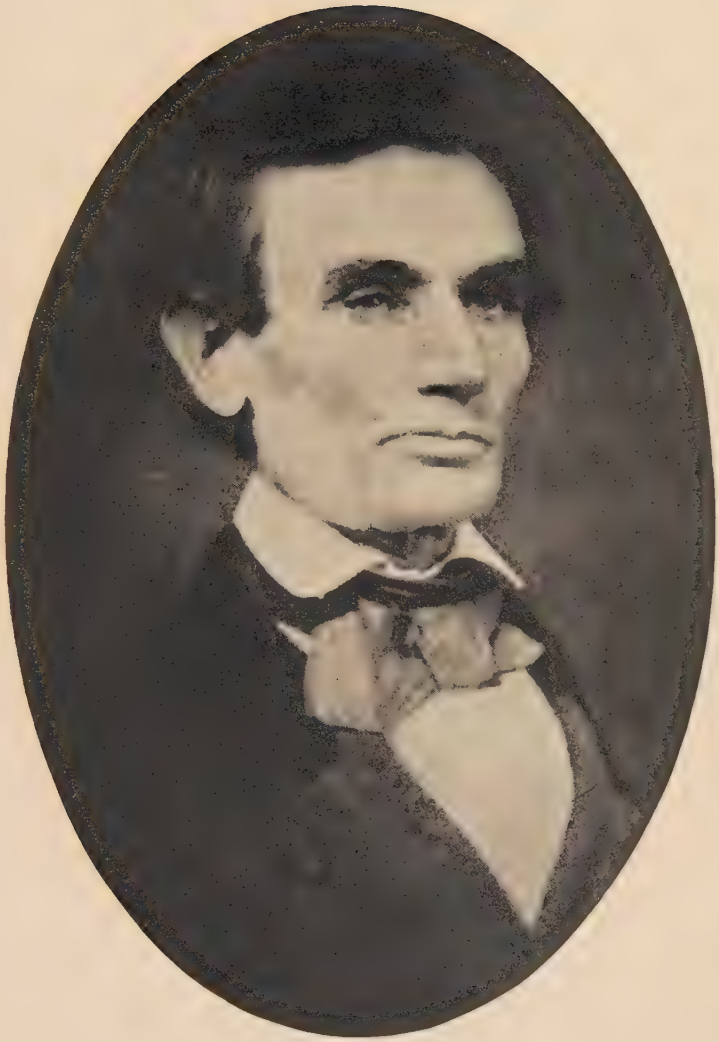
Maintain the Constitution, obey the laws, uphold the Courts, thundered Douglas, and the crowd responded with booming cheers. Lincoln's reason, he continued, for opposing the Dred Scott decision was as bad as his hostility to the Supreme Court itself — the reason that, in holding that a negro, descended from slaves, could not be a citizen, the Court violated the constitutional guarantee that citizens of one State should have all the privileges of citizens of other States. The Supreme Court ruled that that guarantee was for the white man only, and Lincoln asserted that it covered negroes, too.

With the skill of the seasoned debater and campaigner, Douglas made this statement of Lincoln's position the reason for that appeal which was to be the most attractive to voters throughout the lurid months of fighting ahead of him. It was an appeal, too, that gave Lincoln more trouble than anything else that Douglas said, and that forced Lincoln to say some remarkable things. The Little Giant had made the same argument many times before, but during the whole campaign he mercilessly pressed the point anew. It was Douglas's favorite plea for white supremacy, and many Republicans were affected by it.

Even Charles L. Wilson, editor of the *Chicago Journal*, the man who, at Springfield, had placed Lincoln in nomination, was as much against 'negro equality' as he was against slavery. He had written to Trumbull a month before the State Convention was held:[1] 'If there is one rock more dangerous than another in the pathway of the Republican party it is this.' Douglas now rolled this 'dangerous rock' right in front of the Republicans' marching feet:

'This government . . . is founded on the white basis. [Great applause.] It was made by the white man, for the white man, to be administered by white men. [Cheers.]' To be sure, members of any 'inferior race' ought to have all the rights they could use 'consistent with the safety of society' and 'each state must decide for itself the nature and extent of these rights. ["Hear," "hear" and applause.]'

[1] Wilson to Trumbull, Chicago, May 12, 1858. Trumbull MSS.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1857
The ambrotype made by Alschuler in Urbana, Illinois

Illinois had rightly decided that negroes should neither be slaves nor voters; Maine said negroes could vote; neither State had a right to complain of the policy of the other. '["That's so," and cheers.]' New York put a property qualification on negro suffrage. '[Laughter.]' While Douglas did not approve of that, he said, it was not for him or any outsider to tell New York what she should do.

In like manner, other States thought slavery best for them — 'Virginia has the same power by virtue of her sovereignty to protect slavery within her limits as Illinois has to banish it forever from her own borders. ["Hear," "hear," and applause.]' In this as in all domestic regulations, Lincoln's rule of uniformity was neither possible nor right — nor yet wise.

'I do not acknowledge that the states must all be free or must all be slave. I do not acknowledge that the negro must have civil and political rights everywhere or nowhere,' that California should give Chinese the same privileges that Illinois might grant them, that the imported coolies 'must necessarily be put upon an equality with the white race. [Cheers.]'

So, said Douglas, 'the issues between Mr. Lincoln and myself, as respective candidates for the U.S. senate, as made up, are direct, unequivocal, and irreconcilable. He goes for uniformity in our domestic institutions, for a war of sections, until one or the other shall be subdued. I go for the great principle of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, the right of the people to decide for themselves.'

Here a frenzy of cheering stopped Douglas; 'cheer after cheer rent the air;' as the demonstration went on, fireworks were set off, a band played 'Yankee Doodle,' for a long time Douglas could not go on. 'The scene at this period was glorious beyond description,' reported the leading Douglas newspaper. With most of that great throng, at least, the racial appeal had won.

With all his might, Douglas pressed his advantage: 'I am opposed to negro equality' — again the approving uproar broke out. Preserve the purity of our Government as well as the purity of our race; no amalgamation political or otherwise with inferior races! '[Renewed applause.]' See what such mixture had done

in Mexico, Central America, South America, everywhere that it has taken place. '["True," "true."]' Give 'dependent races' every privilege the safety of society would permit — but social, political or any other equality? Never! Once more, wave upon stormy wave of cheering swept up from the great crowd.

Logically, it was the end of Douglas's speech; but conditions were now ideal for an attack upon the political combination against him. He made it. 'The Republican leaders have formed an alliance, an unholy, unnatural alliance, with a portion of the unscrupulous federal office holders. I intend to fight that allied army wherever I meet them. [Cheers.] I know that they deny the alliance while avowing the common purpose, but yet these men who are trying to divide the Democratic party for the purpose of electing a Republican senator in my place, are just as much the agents, the tools, the supporters of Mr. Lincoln as if they were avowed Republicans, and expect their reward for their services when the Republicans come into power. [Cries of "That is true," and cheers.]

'I shall deal with these allied forces just as the Russians dealt with the allies at Sebastopol. The Russians when they fired a broadside at the common enemy did not stop to inquire whether it hit a Frenchman, an Englishman, or a Turk, nor will I stop [laughter and great applause], nor shall I stop to inquire whether my blows hit the Republican leaders or their allies, who are . . . acting in concert with the Republicans to defeat the Democratic party and its nominees. [Cheers and cries of "bravo."]'[1]

Tired out, Douglas said he must stop — 'No! No! Go on!' came the cries. No, he had not been in bed for two nights and had a right to a little sleep — again the cheers arose. He had spoken without preparation and in a desultory manner, he said, and he may have forgotten some points he wished to make. The reception had repaid him for all he had done in the public interest — still more cheers. Finally Douglas ceased; the crowd would not leave but stood there shouting. At the corner of Lake and Dearborn streets a big piece of fireworks was set off, revealing flaming letters until P-O-P-U-L-A-R S-O-V-E-R-E-I-G-N-T-Y

[1] The text differs somewhat from that given by Lincoln on the following day. *Works*, III, 20.

was spelled out. For an hour thousands lingered acclaiming their chieftain and his motto.[1]

When Douglas left the balcony loud calls for Lincoln came. 'Lincoln!' 'Lincoln!' 'Lincoln!' cried his followers lustily. He refused to speak — it was too late, he said, but he would talk to them the next night.

The Douglas press was frantic with joy, that of the Republicans jeered. 'The enthusiasm was really all manufactured for the occasion' and there was little even of that — at least so the editor of the *Chicago Press and Tribune* reported to Trumbull, adding that all Republicans 'were disgusted.'[2] Next morning that paper announced that Lincoln would make answer to Douglas that night at the same place. Handbills to like effect were scattered over the city. Lincoln had sat just within the window behind Douglas, and taken notes of all he said, albeit Douglas's speech was mostly a restatement of former speeches, some of which Lincoln had heard and all of which he had read. Moreover, Douglas's speech was printed in the papers the morning after it was made.

In order to be present at Douglas's meeting, Lincoln had come to Chicago from Springfield the night before, for Herndon wrote: 'Douglas is to be in Chicago on the 9th inst., and Lincoln told me he should be on hand and hear what the giant had to say. This is, I think, prudent.'[3]

The Lincoln meeting was as big as that of Douglas, Lincoln wrote to Koerner five days later, 'and five times as enthusiastic.'[4] Moreover, he continued, it was 'got up without trumpery.'

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 13, 1858, clipped from *Chicago Times*. Douglas's Chicago speech was published in full in the New York *Times*, July 13, *New York Herald*, July 14, 1858, and in other Eastern Democratic and Conservative papers, usually with favorable editorial comment, but sometimes with expression of regret that he had broken with his party.

[2] C. H. Ray to Trumbull, Chicago, *Press and Tribune* office, July 17, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, July 8, 1858. Trumbull MSS. The *Chicago Daily Democrat*, July 9, 1858, said that Lincoln was in Chicago trying a case in Court, and the Republican papers said at the time that his presence in Chicago was purely 'accidental.'

[4] The *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 12, 1858, said that Lincoln's meeting was 'about three-fourths as large as that of the previous evening . . . ; and in point of enthusiasm, about four times as great. . . . We presume that 12,000 is a liberal reckoning for the Douglas meeting and 9000 for that of Lincoln.'

Douglas's speech was bombast, his 'rampant endorsement of the Dred Scott decision' actually lost him votes. His tactics were to make it appear that he was having 'a triumphal entry into, and march through the country.' Friends thought that 'we could have voted him down in that very crowd,' and this opinion was confirmed in Lincoln's mind by 'the strong call for me to speak, when he closed.' So let Koerner not be alarmed. 'I write this for your private eye, to assure you that there is no solid shot in these bombastic parades of his.' [1]

In this humor Lincoln spoke from the balcony of the Tremont House on the night of July 10, 1858. 'Senator Douglas was not present,' testified Lincoln.[2] Just as all Douglas men had turned out for their hero the night before, so now Lincoln men made up most of the crowd. He was introduced by the editor of the *Chicago Journal*. 'A perfect storm of cheers' [3] broke out when Lincoln's tall form was seen, and they were continued until he asked for quiet.[4] Lincoln began by thanking Douglas and his friends for having given him a good seat the night before and for 'otherwise very courteous' treatment by them.

The first thing Lincoln made note of, was Douglas's charge of the bi-partisan alliance against him and his defiance that, like the Russians at Sebastopol, he would fire without caring which of the allies he hit. 'Get out your specks,' cried a voice from the crowd while Lincoln was looking over the paper containing Douglas's speech. Finally he found the passage he wanted, and read what Douglas had said, and continued:

'Well, now, gentlemen, is not that very alarming? [Laughter.] Just to think of it! right at the outset of his canvass, I, a poor, kind, amiable, intelligent [Laughter] gentleman [Laughter and renewed cheers] — I am to be slain in this way. Why, my friend the judge is not only, as it turns out, not a dead lion, nor even a living one — he is the rugged Russian bear. [Roars of laughter and applause.]' Well, if we are the allies and he the Russian, 'we barely suggest to him that these allies took Sebastopol.

[1] Lincoln to Koerner, July 15, 1858. Tracy, 89–90.

[2] Note in Lincoln's handwriting opposite report of Lincoln's speech corrected by him. Barrett Collection.

[3] *Chicago Daily Journal* and *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 12, 1858.

[4] *Ib.* and *Chicago Daily Democrat*, July 12, 1858.

[Long and tremendous applause.]' There was no alliance between the Buchanan men and the Republicans so far as contribution of money or sacrifice of principle was concerned. 'I protest that I neither know anything of it nor do I believe it,' asserted Lincoln. But if for Republicans to be rather glad to see the Democratic Party split was an alliance, 'I confess I am in.' A Buchanan man had told him, testified Lincoln, that he wanted to beat Douglas because he had deserted the President at 'the very hardest point to turn,' in the very trouble Douglas himself had stirred up by his Kansas-Nebraska bill. '[Applause.]'

'Popular Sovereignty! everlasting popular sovereignty! [Laughter and continued cheers.] . . . What is it? Why, it is the sovereignty of the people!' But the Dred Scott decision said that if one man took slaves to a Territory, the people could not keep them out. When they made a State Constitution they could exclude slavery, but during all the preceding years of Territorial Government slaves could be taken in, so that they would be there when the Territory became a State. Thus the people would have to tolerate slavery — 'for they will not take the negro slaves and absolutely deprive the owners of them.' In making this point, Lincoln used a great many words, and some of his sentences were somewhat involved and very long.[1]

What was there new in the statement that the people could form a State Constitution? That always had been so, said Lincoln. Why should Douglas pledge himself to fight all his life for that which nobody — certainly no Republican — opposed but which 'Judge Douglas thinks he has invented? [Applause.] I suppose that Judge Douglas will claim in a little while that he is the inventor of the idea that the people should govern themselves [cheers and laughter]; that nobody ever thought of such a thing until he brought it forward.'[2] Lincoln repeated the

[1] *Works*, III, 23–6. All citations of pages are from Lincoln's *Works*, and expressions of applause are from the report of the speech in the *Chicago Daily Democrat*, July 13, 1858, which report Lincoln very carefully corrected with a pen for an edition of the debates between him and Douglas printed two years later, leaving in all brackets about laughter, applause, cheers, etc. The original scrapbook containing the newspaper reports of the speeches of both men, with Lincoln's changes in ink on the margin, is in the Barrett Collection.

[2] *Ib.*, 26–7.

equality clause of the Declaration of Independence: 'There is the origin of popular sovereignty. [Loud applause.] Who, then, shall come in at this day and claim that he invented it? [Laughter and applause.]'

Lincoln flatly denied that Douglas deserved the credit for beating the Lecompton Constitution. To be sure he had done right in fighting it, but 'all the Republicans in the nation opposed it, and they would have opposed it just as much without Judge Douglas's aid as with it.' Lincoln had been against it before Douglas took his stand, and for the same reason that Douglas belatedly gave. 'I pointed out in a speech a year ago,[1] which I hold in my hand now, that no fair chance was to be given to the people. ["Read it;" "read it."]' Lincoln refused.

'Gentlemen, reading from speeches is a very tedious business, particularly for an old man who has to put on spectacles, and more so if the man be so tall that he has to bend over to the light. [Laughter.]'

Lincoln agreed with Douglas, he said, that the defeat of the Lecompton Constitution was a good thing. 'Who defeated it? [A voice: "Judge Douglas."]' Yes, Lincoln retorted, if Douglas controlled the two anti-Lecompton Democrats in the Senate, he furnished three votes, while the Republicans furnished twenty, and in the House twenty votes to the Republicans, ninety odd. Now, who was it that did the work? [A voice: "Douglas."] Why, yes, Douglas did it? To be sure he did' — and Lincoln went on trying to show that Douglas should not be supported for having beaten Buchanan's Kansas plan, the crowd interrupting with such cries as 'Who killed the bill?' and 'Douglas!' until Lincoln almost lost his temper.[2]

To cries of 'Good,' 'good,' Lincoln repeated the house-divided part of his Springfield speech. Douglas had drawn wrong inferences from that language, said Lincoln; he had merely stated what would happen, not what he thought ought to take place. He did not even say that he wished slavery to be put in course of ultimate extinction. 'I do say so now, however. [Applause.]' It was true, as Douglas said, that that speech had been carefully prepared.

[1] The Springfield speech, June 18, 1857. [2] *Works*, III, 27–30.

'I am not [a] master of language; I have not a fine education; I am not capable of entering into a disquisition upon dialectics, as I believe you call it,' said Lincoln with that self-depreciation which he made use of so often, especially when attacking Douglas, and which was so notable a part of his method throughout this particular campaign.

But, continued Lincoln, what he had said did not bear 'any such construction as Judge Douglas puts upon it' — at least he knew what he *meant*, said Lincoln. Of course the Government had 'endured eighty-two years half slave and half free;' but it had lasted so long only because the public believed all that time that slavery would finally die out. '[Good, good and applause.]' Lincoln asserted that he had always hated slavery, but he had kept quiet about it 'until this new era of the introduction of the Nebraska bill began. I always *believed* that everybody was against it, and that it was in course of ultimate extinction.' [1]

The framers of the Constitution thought so too — else why did 'those old men' [2] exclude slavery from 'new Territory, where it had not already gone?' or put a period on the African slave trade? Those who now resist the spread of slavery are doing only what the founders of this Government had done. [Cheers.] People of the free States had no right to meddle with slavery in the slave States and ought not to want to do it — he had said that a hundred times. Douglas's charge that he wanted to interfere with that institution where it existed was unwarranted. If he ever had said anything from which such an inference could be drawn, 'I now correct it.' [3]

Here the shouts of the Seventh Ward Delegation announced that they were coming in procession. They were received with enthusiastic cheers. They were Germans, and Lincoln soon made an appeal, directed to them especially, that went to their hearts.

He did not favor 'general consolidation of all the local institutions of the various States,' Lincoln insisted. How on earth

[1] *Works*, III, 30–3.

[2] This was, of course, a mere figure of speech — the framers of the Ordinance of 1787 and of the Constitution were, mostly, young men.

[3] *Works*, III, 33–4.

could such an inference be drawn from anything he had said? He was for the principle of local self-government, but Douglas misapplied it. Each State could do as it liked with all local matters 'that interfere with the right of no other State,' and the General Government could do nothing that did not 'concern the whole.' So how could Douglas infer that, because Lincoln wished to put slavery where the public would feel that it would finally come to an end, he therefore wanted Illinois to interfere with the cranberry laws of Indiana?

Perhaps Douglas drew that inference because he looks upon slavery, 'this matter of keeping one sixth of the population of the whole nation in a state of oppression and tyranny unequaled in the world . . . as . . . only equal to the question of the cranberry laws of Indiana — as something having no moral question in it,' like pasturing land with cattle or planting it with tobacco. But 'a vast portion of the American people' did not look upon slavery as so small a thing, but considered it 'a vast moral evil,' just as the Fathers believed it to be, and 'not as an evil merely confining itself to the States where it is situated.' Still, under the Constitution, in the States where it exists, 'we have no right to interfere with it.[1] [Great applause.]' He was not for 'uniformity of domestic regulations in all the States,' Lincoln reiterated, 'by which I suppose it is meant, if we raise corn here, we must make sugarcane grow here too.' What nonsense!

Lincoln was opposed to the Dred Scott decision, he said, but 'I do not resist it. . . . All that I am doing is refusing to obey it as a political rule.' For example, if he were in Congress, he would vote to prohibit slavery in a new Territory in spite of the Dred Scott decision. '[Applause. "Good for you;" "we hope to see it;" "that's right."]' He submitted to it so far as concerned Dred Scott, said Lincoln, but 'we mean to reverse it, and we mean to do it peaceably. [Loud applause — cries of "good."]' If another like case came before the Supreme Court, the Dred Scott decision would control it, 'unless the court decides in another way. . . . Well, we mean to do what we can to have the court decide the other way.'

Judicial decisions had no such sacredness as Douglas threw

[1] *Works*, III, 33–7.

around them. Lincoln said he had never heard of such a thing. That very court had rendered decisions just the opposite of that in the Dred Scott case. 'It is the first of its kind; it is an astonisher in legal history [Laughter] . . . based upon falsehood . . . as to the facts . . . a new wonder of the *world* [Laughter and applause] — and no decision made on any question.' No such decision had ever been held 'by the profession as law.' It always required 'confirmation before the lawyers regarded it as settled law.'

Douglas himself once approved the course of General Jackson when he declared that the Supreme Court could not 'lay down a rule to govern a co-ordinate branch of the government, . . . each member had sworn to support that Constitution as he understood it.' Douglas some years ago had said that Jackson was right. So 'what has now become of all his tirade against "resistance to the Supreme Court?" ["Gone up," "Gone to the theatre."]' [1]

Why did Douglas confine to the Republican leaders his warfare on the alleged alliance against him? Because 'he wants it understood that the mass of the Republican party are really his friends.' But where would that party be if Republicans helped reëlect Douglas? In this 'mighty issue . . . upon which hang the destinies of the nation,' said Lincoln, 'it is nothing to you — nothing to the mass of the people . . . whether or not Judge Douglas or myself shall ever be heard of after this night.' If the Lecompton question should come up again, Douglas 'stands where he stood when in spite of him and his opposition you built up the Republican party. If you indorse him, you tell him you do not care whether slavery be voted up or down, and he will close, or try to close, your mouths with his declaration repeated by the day, the week, the month, and the year. . . . [A voice "Hit him again."]

'I could ask the Republican party, after all the hard names Judge Douglas has called them by, all his repeated charges of their inclination to marry with and hug negroes, all his declarations of Black Republicanism — by the way, we are improving, the black has got rubbed off — but with all that, if he be in-

[1] *Works*, III, 37–41.

dorsed by Republican votes, where do you stand? Plainly, you stand ready saddled, bridled, and harnessed, and waiting to be driven over to the slavery extension camp of the nation, [A voice, "We will hang ourselves first"] . . . every man with a rope around his neck, that halter being held by Judge Douglas.'

Even if the Republican Party should thus foolishly dissolve, a new one would form in time to keep new regions for 'free white laborers, who want the land to bring up their families upon. It is better then, to save the work while it is begun. You have done the labor; maintain it, keep it.' If Republicans should go off after Douglas now, 'as surely as God reigns over you, . . . you will at last come back after your wanderings, merely to do your work over again. [Loud applause.]' [1]

No one wants to deny that the Government was made for white men, in the form Douglas put it, said Lincoln; but again Douglas indulged 'his passion for drawing inferences that are not warranted.' Here Lincoln repeated, word for word, his Springfield speech of the year before about not wanting a negro woman for either slave or wife, '[Laughter and cheers],' there being enough whites and blacks of both sexes to marry their own kind, and that the races would not mix in the Territories if the inferior one was not allowed to go there. '[Immense applause, a voice, "Three cheers for Lincoln!" The cheers were given with a hearty good will.]' [2]

Then Lincoln made his appeal to the Germans. The Fourth of July was celebrated in memory of those 'iron men' who won our independence and founded our Government. From such men we were descended, and had made progress unparalleled in the history of the world. But perhaps half our people had a different ancestry — they were immigrants from Europe who, nevertheless, here found 'themselves our equal in all things.' For they were spiritual kinsmen of the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence which said that 'all men are created equal.'

That 'moral sentiment taught in that day' made these immigrants feel that they 'were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh, of the men who wrote that Declaration [Loud and long continued applause], and so they are. That is the electric cord

[1] *Works*, III, 41–5. [2] *Ib.*, 45–6. This is in the *Works*.

in that Declaration that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world. [Applause.]'[1]

How did the Declaration square with Douglas's idea of 'don't care if slavery is voted up or down,' or with the Dred Scott decision? '[A voice, Hit him again.]' Douglas said that the Declaration meant only that Americans asserted their equality with the English people. 'According to his construction, you Germans are not connected with it.' Douglas's teachings tended to destroy love of liberty and change the form of our Government. His reasoning, that inferior races should have only such rights as they were capable of enjoying, was 'the arguments that kings have made for enslaving the people in all ages of the world . . . the same old serpent that says, You work and I eat.'

If Douglas's 'don't care' proposition were accepted, 'it does not stop with the negro.' Where would the process of making exceptions to the Declaration end? 'If one man says it does not mean a negro, why not another say it does not mean some other man? If that Declaration is not the truth, let us get the statute-book in which we find it, and tear it out! Who is so bold as to do it? If it is not true, let us tear it out. [cries of "No, no."] Let us stick to it, then; [Cheers.] let us stand firmly by it, then. [Applause.]'

When the Government was founded certain conditions existed that had to be submitted to. 'We had slaves among us; we could not get our Constitution unless we permitted them to remain in slavery;' that unavoidable submission 'does not destroy the principle that is the charter of our liberties. Let that charter stand as our standard.'

When the Saviour said, '"Be ye [therefore] perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,"' he did not expect any one to reach such excellence; but 'he set that up as a standard, and he who did most toward reaching that standard attained the highest degree of moral perfection.' So let the principle that all men are created equal, 'be as nearly reached as we can. If we cannot give freedom to every creature, let us do

[1] *Works*, III, 46–8.

nothing that will impose slavery upon any other creature. [Applause.] Let us then turn this government back into the channel in which the framers of the Constitution originally placed it.' Otherwise 'we are tending in the contrary direction that our friend Judge Douglas proposes — not intentionally — working in the traces that tend to make this one universal slave nation. [A voice, "That is so."] He is one that runs in that direction, and as such I resist him.'

Thus Lincoln reached the climax of his peroration. 'Let us discard all this quibbling about this man and the other man, this race and that race and the other race being inferior, and therefore they must be placed in an inferior position. Let us discard all these things, and unite as one people throughout this land, until we shall once more stand up declaring that all men are created equal.' [1]

Ringing cheers came like blasts of a thousand bugles.[2] Lincoln had struck the chord that appealed most to the fighting Republicans of Northern Illinois. His letter of elation to Koerner was wholly justified. Not since the emotional scenes at Bloomington when he made his 'Lost Speech' two years before, had such a demonstration been witnessed by him. The sheer oratory of the closing passages of his Chicago speech had worked its spell.

The leading Republican papers of Illinois published Lincoln's speech in full and praised it highly; the Douglas press made scornful reference to it; the few Buchanan organs were not abusive, to say the least. Stating that Lincoln's presence in Chicago at the time was purely 'accidental' [3] the *Chicago Press and Tribune* declared that, in spite of hurried preparation, his speech was an 'overwhelming refutation' of that of Douglas, and that while the Douglas audience had been indifferent, Lincoln's 'was enthusiastically for Lincoln' — in short, Lincoln had 'knocked Douglas higher than a kite.' [4]

In the East, journals friendly to Douglas were fair to Lincoln and printed his speech as conspicuously as they had published

[1] *Works*, III, 19–52.

[2] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 13, 1858, and other Republican papers.

[3] Herndon to Trumbull, July 8, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[4] July 12, 13, 1858. Editorial and news item.

that of his rival, and with the *Chicago Republican* version of the meeting and incidents of it.[1] But the slight comment of the Eastern Republican press on Lincoln's Chicago speech was only mildly favorable. Still even conservative papers in New York thought that he would win. 'If the rank and file of both democrats and republicans oppose Judge Douglas, who will be left to support him?' [2]

At best, Douglas had a task that would tax his utmost powers; Lincoln was an able man and the Republicans were burning to beat Douglas, their old-time foe; Lincoln had taken 'the strictest party grounds,' much to the disappointment of 'his political friends in the East,' but Douglas had scorned to conciliate Republicans and 'with all his accustomed gallantry . . . [was] waging unsparing war' on them and Administration Democrats alike — such was the New York *Times*' analysis of the Illinois fight.[3] The Southern press that favored Douglas was far more enthusiastic over his speech than was any Republican paper outside of Illinois over Lincoln's speech, and even the 'ultraists' of the South began to talk of supporting Douglas for President in 1860.[4]

For a week the two combatants stayed in Chicago, Douglas making arrangements for his trip to Springfield, where the Democratic State Committee was to prepare with him his schedule of appointments for the campaign, and Lincoln attending the Federal Court and conferring with the party managers. The Republican State Chairman was in New York at the time. Upon his return he wrote to Trumbull that some Republicans had been 'lost' largely because of Greeley's course, but that there would be a reaction against Douglas before the campaign should end. The fight was on and 'Lincoln has commenced it gallantly. The only trouble will be that (as I told him) he will allow Douglass to put him on the defensive.' Trumbull must hurry back and help with his organizing talent — 'come by the way of New York and straighten out the newspapers there:' if we fail in this contest all hopes for Republicanism in 1860 are gone.[5]

[1] New York *Times*, July 16, 1858.
[2] *New York Herald*, July 12, 1858.
[3] New York *Times*, July 16, 1858.
[4] *Richmond Enquirer*, July 14, 1858.
[5] Judd to Trumbull, Chicago, July 16, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

Attached to the Illinois Central train from Chicago for Bloomington, July 16, 1858, was a private car, decorated with mottoes and flags.[1] In it were Douglas and his wife who had come to Chicago with him and who now accompanied her husband throughout the long hard series of campaign trips of which this was the first. With Douglas, too, were his secretary, two stenographers, and Democratic Party officials. Press correspondents could come in when they wished, Democratic delegations were also welcomed.

Republicans made the most of such luxury. A private car! Awful! The railroads were for Douglas! But, in fact, considering the comfort of Mrs. Douglas, the size of the company, and the sheer necessities of the situation, it was only good sense for Douglas to take a private car while he could get it — for he was starting on a campaign that lasted for more than three months and took him many thousands of miles to every part of the State by every kind of conveyance.[2]

On the same train was Lincoln, for it had been decided that he should follow Douglas wherever he went.

At Joliet, where, reported the Douglas organ at Springfield, 'the earth was fairly shaken by the cheers of the thousands,' [3] a flat car was coupled to the end of the train, and on it was a brass cannon served by two young men in semi-military uniform. When stations where stops were made came into view, the gun was fired repeatedly, and everybody in town was thus informed that Douglas was coming. All through the campaign, he took this piece of artillery with him whenever it was possible to do so, and 'Douglas's powder' became one of the many picturesque features of those hectic months. His well-cut and carefully brushed coat and trousers were of blue broadcloth and upon his massive head he wore a big wide-brimmed white felt hat which, contrasting sharply with his heavy long black hair and dark complexion, added a touch of the theatrical to his appearance.

At Bloomington, Douglas was to make his first speech. Al-

[1] Koerner, II, 61.

[2] The statistics of Douglas's speeches and journeys during this campaign are given in *Era:* Cole, 170, from the New York *Times*, clipped in *Illinois State Register*, Nov. 23, 1858.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 19, 1858.

though it was in Republican territory, more than two thousand people were there to greet and hear him. The roar of the cannon on the flat car was answered by thunders of artillery from the town, and when the great man got off the train, the usual procession, led by a band playing 'Hail Columbia,' escorted him through cheering throngs to the Landon House, which was gaily decorated in his honor. That night Douglas spoke in the Court House square.[1]

In the main his speech was the same as that made in Chicago; but it was even clearer than that lucid performance, and eighty thousand copies of it in pamphlet form were distributed all over Illinois, and many were sent throughout the Union.[2] Again he charged a coalition between the Republican organization and the Administration managers to beat him — charged it in stronger terms than before. Still, said Douglas, if the people believed that Lincoln would serve Illinois better than he they ought to elect him.

Douglas enlarged his reply to Lincoln's house-divided declaration; convince either North or South of the truth of that, make it the policy of either section, and the necessary, the inevitable result would be war. 'What man in Illinois would not lose the last drop of his heart's blood before he would submit to the institution of slavery being forced upon us by the other States, against our will?' The same was true of Southern men, if the North should try to abolish it in their States. Why not let the people of each State do as they pleased about slavery, and be accountable to their God for their action? 'It is not for me to arraign them for what they do. I will not judge them, lest I shall be judged' — a Biblical quotation Lincoln was to make use of less than seven years later in the greatest utterance of his life.[3]

Lincoln had said in his Chicago speech that he did not mean that the free States should '*enter into* the Southern States and interfere with slavery.' 'Oh, no!' exclaimed Douglas; 'they stand on this side of the Ohio River and shoot across.' In practical results abolition pamphlets were as bad as bombs. Sec-

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 19, 1858; Stevens, 550.

[2] Sheahan, 417. [3] The Second Inaugural, March 4, 1865.

tional agitation which had created a sectional party had also created all the trouble.

If he were in the Senate, just how would Lincoln make all States free? asked Douglas. By a bill to abolish slavery in Kentucky? By a proposal to amend the Constitution? 'Who among you expects to live, or have his children live, until slavery shall be established in Illinois or abolished in South Carolina?' It was beside the point to say that slavery must not go into Kansas; the people were to vote on the Lecompton Constitution and would surely defeat it. So that question was out of the way.

And just how would Lincoln reverse the Dred Scott decision? By electing a Republican President and packing the Court with Republican Justices, pledged in advance to decide a particular case in a particular way? Would the people have confidence in such a Court? Moreover, the Justices were on the Bench for life and probably would not die soon enough to let such a President, if such a President ever could be elected, fill their places, as Lincoln planned.

So 'what is he going to do about it?' Put through a bill to restore the Missouri Compromise? That would be doing something that the Supreme Court had just said Congress could not do. Thus Congress would be at war with the highest tribunal in the land. Was that sensible or patriotic? Could anything worse come to pass? Yet that was the certain end of Lincoln's plan.

In such fashion Douglas met the points made by Lincoln in his Chicago speech. He went over again his argument against negro equality and added: Lincoln's objection to the Dred Scott decision is that it denies citizenship to negroes and thus controverts the equality phrase of the Declaration. According to Lincoln that was a standard toward which all should strive just as all should try to reach Jesus' standard of perfection even 'as your Father in heaven is perfect.' As the beginning of that approach, Lincoln wanted negroes to be citizens; but the first step toward that would be the repeal of the Illinois law forbidding free negroes to come into the State. Did Lincoln favor that?

He did not understand Lincoln to assert that negroes should be made our equals socially, nor even 'in fact as citizens,' said Douglas, but only our equals 'under the law;' yet he thus ad-

mits the right of the negro woman to marry the white man. Deny it as he would, explain or qualify, there was where Lincoln's doctrine of racial equality must come at last — the right of negroes to vote, to hold office, to become lawmakers, executives, judges, and in the end the right of amalgamation if they could attain it.

Here Douglas made by far the most important part of his speech — a point which he had overlooked at Chicago, although he had stated it many times before during the last ten years. That point was that slavery could not exist in any place, where the people did not want it. It was the creature of municipal law and required local police regulations for its protection. Even with these protections slavery could not be forced upon an unwilling people, said Douglas; Kansas was proof of that. Under the laws of the so-called 'bogus' Legislature slavery was well guarded, yet it had decreased there all the time.

'Why has not slavery obtained a foothold in Kansas under these circumstances? Simply because there was a majority of her people opposed to slavery, and every slaveholder knew that if he took his slaves there, the moment that majority got possession of the ballot-boxes, and a fair election was held, that moment slavery would be abolished, and he would lose them.'

If slavery had thus died out under protective local laws, how long could it last under unfriendly legislation? 'I tell you, my friends, it is impossible under our institutions to force slavery on an unwilling people.' Let the principle of popular sovereignty be fairly carried out, and 'slavery will never exist one day, or one hour in any Territory, against the unfriendly legislation of an unfriendly people.' That was the practical result, no matter 'how the Dred Scott decision may have settled the abstract question,' asserted Douglas, and he quoted the language of an eminent Southern Senator to the same effect although in terms much stronger.[1]

[1] 'I do not care a fig which the decision shall be, for it is of no particular consequence; slavery cannot exist a day or an hour, in any Territory or State, unless it has affirmative laws sustaining and supporting it, furnishing police regulations and remedies; and an omission to furnish them would be as fatal as a constitutional prohibition. Without affirmative legislation in its favor, slavery could not exist any longer than a newborn infant could survive under the heat of the sun, on a barren rock, without protec-

If the people of a Territory were for slavery they would pass laws and adopt police regulations — patrol laws and the like — as every slave State had done; but 'if they do not want it, they will withhold that legislation, and by withholding it slavery is as dead as if it was prohibited by a constitutional prohibition, especially if, in addition, their legislation is unfriendly, as it would be if they were opposed to it.' Thrice in this speech Douglas asserted the doctrine of unfriendly legislation and thrice declared that the Dred Scott decision was an abstraction without practical effect; a conclusion, which, as we have seen, had been reached and announced by the conservative press of the North, soon after the decision was made.

At the end of his very long speech, Douglas again told the crowd to vote for Lincoln if they thought that he could do more than Douglas to promote sectional harmony, preserve the Union and advance the prosperity, honor, and glory of Illinois, but added that he would be grateful for their support if they believed that he had been faithful to his trust.[1]

Lincoln had been given a place on the platform and listened to Douglas's speech, and, late as it was, the crowd called loudly for him. 'He held back for a little while,' but when he did come forward his friends gave him 'three rousing cheers much louder than those given to Judge Douglas.' He rose, he said, to tell the crowd that he would soon visit them again and make a speech, but that 'this meeting was called by the friends of Judge Douglas and it would be improper for me to address it.' [2]

We are fortunate in having the description of Lincoln at this time, by an eyewitness of unusual trustworthiness and with special training in the observation of appearance, manners, dress, and the like. Leonard W. Volk, who two years later made the famous life mask of Lincoln, was in Douglas's party,[3] and was introduced to Lincoln while on the way to Springfield. Volk had

tion. It would wilt and die for the want of support.' This extract is given in Lincoln's *Works*, III, 89, without the name of the Senator making the statement.

[1] *Works*, III, 54–107. Attacks by the Douglas press upon Lincoln's criticism of the Supreme Court for the Dred Scott decision called out defensive replies from the Republican papers. Lincoln and all Republicans intended to get it reversed because 'the Dred Scott iniquity' made slavery National, 'but no one proposes to rebel.' *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 16, 1858.

[2] *Bloomington Pantagraph*, July 17, 1858. [3] Whitney, 540.

been a young workman in a marble yard at Quincy.[1] Douglas had discovered him there, seen his talent, and sent him to Italy whence he had lately returned. His first work had been to make a bust of his benefactor, and on the present journey, he got Lincoln's order for the life mask.[2]

Lincoln came into the hotel at Bloomington alone, relates Volk, 'carrying an old carpet-bag in his hand, and wearing a weather-beaten silk hat — too large, apparently, for his head — a long, loosely fitting frock-coat, of black alpaca, and vest and trousers of the same material.' He was certainly very dusty, and while he was washing, several old friends 'rushed in to see him, some of them shouting, "How are you, Old Abe?". . . This was the first good view I had of the "coming man," though I had seen him at a distance, and passed him on the sidewalk in Chicago a few days before.' [3]

Next day, on the train to which Douglas's car was attached, Lincoln was again a passenger — 'the only Lincoln man on the train.' [4] It was at Atlanta, on the board-walk in front of the hotel, that Volk was introduced to Lincoln.

'He saluted me with his natural cordiality,' relates Volk, 'grasping my hand in both his large hands with a vise-like grip, and, looking down into my face with his beaming, dark, dull eyes, said:

'"How do you do? I am glad to meet you. I have read of you in the papers: you are making a statue of Judge Douglas for Governor Matteson's new house."

'"Yes, sir," I answered; "and sometime, when you are in Chicago and can spare the time, I would like to have you sit to me for your bust."

'"Yes, I will, Mr. Volk — shall be glad to, the first opportunity I have."' [5]

But that opportunity did not come until after Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency, and then only the cast of the face was made.

As the Douglas train sped toward Springfield, the rain which

[1] Browning's *Diary*, I, 295, July 20, 1857.
[2] Whitney, 548.
[3] Volk's statement in Whitney, 540.
[4] Sheahan, 417.
[5] Volk's statement in Whitney, 540–1.

had been falling heavily for hours suddenly stopped. The downpour, however, had spoiled the elaborate decorations which the Democratic committee had hung in Edwards's Grove north of the city where the meeting was to be held, trees were dripping, the ground soggy and steaming. Yet, testifies Volk, there was 'a vast crowd waiting,' and, he continues: 'On leaving the train, most of the passengers climbed over the fences and crossed the stubble-field, taking a short-cut to the grove, among them Mr. Lincoln, who stalked forward alone, taking immense strides, the before-mentioned carpet-bag and an umbrella in his hands, and his coat-skirts flying in the breeze. I managed to keep pretty close in the rear of the tall, gaunt figure, with the head craned forward, apparently much over the balance, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, that was moving something like a hurricane across the rough stubble-field! He approached the rail-fence, sprang over it as nimbly as a boy of eighteen, and disappeared from my sight.' [1]

The greeting of Douglas was frantic. 'It is impossible to describe it,' wrote the editor of the *Chicago Times* who was there.[2] Another bad sign for the Republicans was that an old line Whig, and the author of the prohibition bill of 1855 at that, Benjamin S. Edwards, presided and introduced Douglas.[3] His Springfield speech was identical in argument with those made in Chicago and Bloomington; but much of the language was different and the clarity of statement had increased, as always is the case with a campaigner who makes, extemporaneously, the same speech.

Also Douglas was in unusually good spirits and his delivery was such that friends declared the Springfield speech the best he had made in the campaign.[4] Again a pamphlet edition — this time of fifty thousand — was scattered over the State.[5] The newspaper report of it is full of cries from hearers, applause,

[1] Volk's statement in Whitney, 541. At the Douglas meeting Volk mistook a man on horseback for Lincoln. Lincoln did not stay to hear Douglas.

[2] Sheahan, 417. Also Springfield Correspondence, New York *Times*, July 19, 1858, reproduced conspicuously in *Richmond Enquirer*, July 29, 1858, and in many other papers. This dispatch was uncommonly fair and spoke highly of Lincoln.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 19, 1858.

[4] Koerner, II, 64. [5] Sheahan, 418.

and cheers. The *Richmond Enquirer*,[1] which from the first had taken Douglas's side against the President, printed the speech in full. The *New Orleans Delta* came out for him.[2] Even the bitterly hostile and extreme 'Southern rights,' fire-eating *South Side Democrat*, published at the capital of Virginia, was won over, in spite of Douglas's repeated assertion that slavery could not exist in the Territories without friendly local legislation.[3]

Frequently Douglas made the crowd laugh. Some Democrats blamed him for his votes 'because the republicans voted the same way. [Great laughter. "What did they say."] Why, many of them said that Douglas voted with the republicans, yes . . . with black republicans. [Renewed laughter.]' But it was just the other way round, for, as the New York *Tribune* had declared, 'the Republicans went over to Douglas and voted with him. ["Good," and cheers.]'

With contempt Douglas dismissed Lincoln's charge of a conspiracy on the part of two Presidents, the Supreme Court, and himself involving the Kansas-Nebraska act and the Dred Scott decision. 'If Mr. Lincoln deems *me* a conspirator of that kind, all I have to say is that *I* do not think so badly of the President of the United States and the Supreme Court of the United States. [Three cheers were here given for the Supreme Court of the United States.]'

Again Douglas announced, and at great length, his familiar doctrine that slavery could not exist anywhere unless protected by friendly local legislation, and not even then if the temper of the people was hostile to it.[4] At even greater length, and with stronger blows, Douglas drove home his issue of negro equality to shouts of 'bravo,' 'good,' and 'hurrah for Douglas.' All white

[1] July 26, 1858. On July 8, this leading Southern paper printed a strong editorial in support of Douglas.

[2] July 20, 1858, in *Richmond Enquirer*, July 29, 1858.

[3] Clipped in *ib.* Although still lashing Douglas for his war on the President which 'puts him out of the pale of future hopes from the Democracy,' the *South Side Democrat* was for him in his fight for the Senate. Oh, why had such a man wrecked his national career! 'We cannot read his speeches at Chicago or Springfield without regretting that a man, so sound on the great Constitutional questions which divide Black Republicanism and Democracy, should have permitted himself to risk his future, his party, and the hopes of the country, on an issue such as that which led him off from his old associates.'

[4] Douglas made use of over six hundred words in his careful explanation of this point. *Works* (Lincoln's), III, 138–41.

people, emigrants or natives, Germans, Irish, French, Scotch, English, were 'our equals,' but negroes were not, Douglas asserted. 'Glory to you,' 'Hurrah for Douglas,' and tumultuous cheers came from the crowd. Once more Douglas paid tribute to Lincoln and in terms of much higher praise than before — there was no objection to him except for his 'monstrous revolutionary doctrines' which he meant to carry out if he won. '["He never shall."]'

Lincoln was not present,[1] for he was hard at work preparing for the Republican counter demonstration in the evening. But no matter, for the junior partner 'was on the ground,' as he wrote to Trumbull,[2] and he said that Douglas only made enemies. When Douglas finished there was the customary cheering, reports of which, on both sides, we shall soon get very tired of hearing, and the rejoicing Democrats formed a procession and marched into town.[3] But the whole thing was a 'grand failure,' said the leading Republican paper of the State.[4]

That night,[5] in the Hall of the House of Representatives, Lincoln again made answer to Douglas, who was not there, having gone on to fill another speaking engagement.[6] Lincoln took the stand 'amid the cheers of his auditors.'[7] Except to complain of Republican 'disadvantages' in the campaign, Lincoln stated no new point. One of these disadvantages was the legislative apportionment law, as to which, however, 'perhaps there is no ground of complaint on our part.' The other was the contrast between Douglas and himself.

'Senator Douglas is of world-wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party, or who have been of his party for years past, have been looking upon him as certainly, at no distant day, to be the President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post-offices, land-offices, and

[1] 'I did not hear him.' Lincoln's statement in his night speech. *Ib.*, 169.

[2] Herndon to Trumbull, July 22, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 19, 1858.

[4] Springfield Correspondence, *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 19, in issue July 20, 1858.

[5] July 17, 1858. [6] Stevens, 551.

[7] Springfield Correspondence, *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 19, in issue July 20, 1858.

marshalships and cabinet appointments, chargé-ships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting out in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands. [Great laughter.] And as they have been gazing upon this attractive picture so long, they cannot, in the little distraction that has taken place in the party, bring themselves to give up the charming hope; but with greedier anxiety they rush about him, sustain him, and give him marches, triumphal entries, and receptions beyond what even in the days of his highest prosperity they could have brought about in his favor.

'On the contrary, nobody has ever expected me to be President. In my poor, lean, lank face nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out. [Tremendous cheering and laughter.] These are disadvantages all, taken together, that the Republicans labor under.' [1]

What despicable, what hypocritical self-abasement, said the *Chicago Times*, when commenting on these curious passages; Lincoln talked like Uriah Heep! [2]

Then Lincoln went on to expose Douglas's plan of campaign, including 'their thunderings of cannon, their marching and music, their fizzle-gigs and fireworks,' which were, however, 'auxiliary' to his speeches, 'substantially one and the same' everywhere.[3] Why should Douglas get the credit for defeating the Lecompton Constitution? asked Lincoln; and again he gave the mathematical comparison of Democratic and Republican votes against it, that he had made in Chicago.[4] This brought out 'tremendous cheering,' we are told.

Douglas was like the lost sheep found by the owner and brought home in glee, said Lincoln. '[Great cheering, renewed cheering.] "Verily, I say unto you, there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance." [Cheering.]' So 'let him repent [Vociferous applause]' and the Republicans would forgive him. '[Laughter and cheers.]'

[1] *Works*, III, 157–8. Again expressions of cheers, laughter, etc., are taken from the newspaper report of Lincoln's speech in the book of press reports revised by Lincoln. Barrett Collection.

[2] *Chicago Times*, July 19, 1858.

[3] *Works*, III, 159–60.

[4] *Works*, III, 165–6.

Who denied that the people of a Territory could form any State Constitution they wished? Was that what Douglas was 'going to spend his life for? Does he expect to stand up in majestic dignity, and go through his *apotheosis* and become a god, in the maintaining of a principle which neither man nor mouse in all God's creation is opposing?' [1]

Lincoln spent much time over Douglas's statement that he had read Lincoln's house-divided speech with care, but complained of Douglas's quotation from it. 'I will not say that he wilfully misquotes, but he does fail to quote accurately.' So Lincoln himself would repeat the passage from memory, and if Douglas 'repeats his misrepresentation, it shall be plain to all that he does so wilfully.' If so Lincoln would have to change his course and take another, 'better suited to the real exigencies of the case.' To this threat, Lincoln added: 'I set out, in this campaign, with the intention of conducting it strictly as a gentleman, in substance at least, if not in the outside polish. The latter I shall never be, but that which constitutes the inside of a gentleman I hope I understand, and am not less inclined to practice than others. [Cheers.]' It would not be his fault, said Lincoln, if his plan to make the fight 'upon principle, and with fairness on both sides,' had to be given up.[2]

What had made Lincoln thus angry, was Douglas's charge that his statement that the Nation must become all free or all slave meant war. It meant no such thing, Lincoln insisted, and it was not fair of Douglas to say that it did. So Lincoln again repeated the now familiar house-divided passage and said that in it he had stated his expectation, not his wish. Could not Douglas see the difference?

'I have often expressed an expectation to die, but I have never expressed a wish to die.' [3] Lincoln restated his Chicago speech to the effect that all he wanted was to stop the spread of slavery as the Missouri Compromise had done, up to the repeal of which the public mind believed that it would finally die out; and he quoted Brooks of South Carolina as saying, 'when they were presenting him with canes, silver plate, gold pitchers and the like, for assaulting Senator Sumner,' that 'when this Consti-

[1] *Works*, III, 164. [2] *Ib.*, 171. [3] *Ib.*, III, 172–3.

tution was formed, it was the belief of no man that slavery would last to the present day.' [1]

Consolidation! When Congress kept slavery out of new Territories and Courts decided that to take a slave into a free country made him free, did consolidation follow? He had said at Chicago, Lincoln reiterated, that he opposed the Dred Scott decision only as stating a 'political rule;' yet Douglas kept up his attack, forgetting that 'I have turned the tables against himself on that very point.' But that was like Douglas. Turn his own point against him 'and gaff him through — he will still cling to it till he can invent some new dodge to take the place of it.' [2]

Lincoln quoted most of Jefferson's celebrated denial that the judiciary is the final expounder of the Constitution — 'a very dangerous doctrine indeed, and one which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy' — and the great radical's insistence that each department of government must decide its constitutional powers and duties for itself. That, said Lincoln, showed that Douglas's judicial theory 'would reduce us to the despotism of an oligarchy.' [3] After giving the remainder of his Chicago arguments on the Dred Scott decision, Lincoln exclaimed:

'Free men of Sangamon, free men of Illinois, free men everywhere, judge ye between him and me upon this issue.' [4]

Of course slavery could and would go into the Territories against the will of their people under the Dred Scott decision, insisted Lincoln. Was it not forced upon the colonies over the opposition of the colonists — planted 'by individual men in spite of the wishes of the people; the mother government refusing to prohibit it, and withholding from the people of the colonies the authority to prohibit it for themselves?' That was the exact situation in which the Territories were now placed by the Dred Scott decision.

This was as near as Lincoln came to discussing Douglas's assertion that slavery could not exist against unfriendly local legis-

[1] *Works*, III, 174–5. [2] *Ib.*, 177–8.

[3] *Ib.*, 179. See Jefferson to William Charles Jarvis, Sept. 28, 1820.

[4] *Ib.*, III, 180–1.

lation, until he asked Douglas his famous question on that subject at Freeport nearly six weeks later.

As to negro equality: if the Declaration did not mean what it said, amend it so as to read, 'that all men are created equal, except negroes,' cried Lincoln. Douglas had said at first, that the 'created equal' phrase applied only to the colonists and Englishmen; but when Lincoln had pointed out that, if so, it did not include immigrants, Douglas had amended his definition so as to cover all Europeans. Well, then, did it embrace Russians in Asia? asked Lincoln. Pretty soon Douglas would again amend his statement. 'He is not at all particular. He is satisfied with anything which does not endanger the nationalizing of negro slavery. It may draw white men down, but it must not lift negroes up.' [1]

With reference to the blacks, the Declaration meant only that they were the equals of the whites in their right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' said Lincoln. 'All I ask for the negro is that if you do not like him, let him alone. If God gave him but little, that little let him enjoy.'

Since Douglas had not denied Lincoln's charge of conspiracy against him and others, to repeal the Missouri Compromise and procure the Dred Scott decision, '*on his own tacit admission I renew that charge. I charge him with having been a party to that conspiracy, . . . for the sole purpose of nationalizing slavery.*' [2]

With these grave words, Lincoln closed, 'amidst loud and continuous cheering.' His friends had been urging him to take the aggressive. He had done so. Answering a letter of a supporter who had complained of his '*defensive*' tactics, Lincoln agreed and said that he hoped that his Springfield speech, although 'not very well reported . . . in the *State Journal*,' would show that he was 'already improving.' [3]

With seeming contempt, the Douglas organ asked comparison of its hero's 'masterly' speech and the 'fretful and feeble declaration' of Lincoln in reply to it. That he knew he was beaten already was shown by the fact that his 'customary good nature'

[1] *Works*, III, 182–6. [2] *Ib.*, 186–8. Italics author's.

[3] Lincoln to John Mathers, July 20, 1858. *Ib.*, 188. Of this speech Lincoln heard that it was the most 'taking' speech he had made. It was printed in pamphlet form and also in a German edition. Lincoln to Koerner, Aug. 6, 1858. Tracy, 92–3.

disappeared and he became 'excited and ill tempered.' Let him call Douglas a 'dead lion' and himself a 'living dog' if he liked, but vulgar impugning of motives of those who supported Douglas as 'conscientiously' as Lincoln opposed him would not make people forget that Lincoln himself was in eager pursuit of Douglas's place. Think of Douglas leaving his sick-bed in Washington and going to the Senate to 'make a last and noble effort in behalf of the principles of freedom;' and then think of Lincoln trailing Douglas about Illinois to get crowds and 'hurl upon Douglas and the supreme court his repeated charges of "Conspiracy."' [1] The *State Register* even printed Lincoln's answer to Douglas two days before the Republican organ published it. Look at the two and judge, said the Democratic paper.[2] Day after day its columns were filled with editorials of mingled argument, derision, and scorn.[3]

Republican papers glorified Lincoln's speech: the cheering was 'tremendous,' and no wonder, for 'his onslaught was terrible' and he 'completely demolished Mr. Douglas.' [4] Although not the equal of Douglas as a leader, Lincoln was 'a remarkably able man. . . . And he will be, beyond all question, the strongest opponent that could be found in the State to oppose Mr. Douglas,' wrote the correspondent of a leading New York journal.[5] But Republican politicians were not so sure. Hurry back and take charge, wrote the State Auditor to Trumbull; Douglas and his friends were 'burning *rosin* at a great rate.' It was to be a hard fight: 'We old line whigs belonging to the Republican ranks are not worth a curse to carry on a campaign;' former Democrats must do it.[6]

The ever cheerful Herndon, however, thought that the speech of his senior partner was 'a "whaler."' Still, 'Lincoln made no special converts,' the junior partner admitted, but then neither did Douglas. However, Herndon was especially joyous, at the moment, for he had just received a letter from Greeley which

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 22, 1858. [2] *Ib.*, July 17, 1858.

[3] *Ib.*, July 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, *et seq.*, 1858.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 19, 1858.

[5] Springfield Correspondence, New York *Times*, July 19, 1858, clipped in *Richmond Enquirer*, July 29, 1858.

[6] Jesse K. Dubois, Springfield, to Trumbull, July 17, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

said: 'Now, Herndon, I am going to do all I reasonably can to elect Lincoln.' [1]

Before Lincoln made his speech, the *State Register* was on the streets with a long and serious editorial about Lincoln, to which he paid no heed then or for nearly two months afterward, although through the press and general talk it was kept before the people all the time. The editorial was a revival of the old charges against Lincoln for his famous 'spot' resolutions and certain votes in Congress during the Mexican War, which, as we have seen, hurt him badly at the time, and, temporarily, stopped his political career.[2]

Soon after his nomination the *Chicago Times* [3] had accused Lincoln of having voted against supplies for the American troops in Mexico; but Republican papers had easily refuted this, since Lincoln did not enter the House until the war was practically over. Besides, the war 'was a trumped up humbug' anyway, 'a war of the politicians in the interest of the South, . . . a pro-slavery raid . . . upon a neighboring pigmy.' [4] So the Democratic press, thereafter carefully keeping within the record, made Lincoln's opposition to the war an issue in the campaign and continued to press it until election day, and it had an appreciable effect upon voters.

Just before Lincoln's Springfield speech of July 17, 1858, the Chicago Republican organ had given the Democratic press an opening to renew the attack. It printed an extract from Lincoln's anti-war speech in the House, together with a provocative editorial.[5] The *State Register* now told how Lincoln had canvassed his Congressional District after the war had been going on for months, pledging support of it, sometimes in the presence of the volunteers themselves; his election 'as the friend and supporter of the war;' his attempt in Congress by means of the spot resolutions, to 'put the American people *in the wrong* and the Mexican enemy *in the right*' — and that, too, when peace nego-

[1] Herndon, Springfield, to Trumbull, July 22, 1858. *Ib.*

[2] See Chap. VIII, Vol. I. [3] June 23, 1858.

[4] *Chicago Tribune*, June 25, 1858. On July 1 the *Daily Democratic Press* was consolidated with the *Tribune* and on July 3 appeared the first issue of the *Chicago Press and Tribune*.

[5] *Ib.*, July 14, 1858.

tiations were under way after an unbroken series of American victories; the 'jeers' of the House and 'scorn and derision of the country.' The paper reproduced the one-time popular jingle about Lincoln and his resolutions:

'Mr. Speaker! Spot! Spot! Spot!
Mr. Speaker! Where's the Spot?
Is it in Spain or is it not?
Mr. Speaker! Spot! Spot! Spot!'

Like 'the blue-light federalists in the war of 1812,' Lincoln voted that the Mexican War had been 'unnecessarily and unconstitutionally' begun by the President, and that, therefore, our soldiers 'were nothing but BUTCHERERS AND MURDERERS;' yet in his speech in the House Lincoln admitted that he had not 'examined the question as to whether his country was right or wrong until his arrival in Washington.' The war had been in progress for nearly two years before Lincoln so much as 'looked into the origin and history' of it, or 'could tell whether his country was right or wrong.' What a confession for a public man to make![1]

Other Democratic papers followed the lead of the Springfield organ and printed, with acrid comment, the old resolutions against Lincoln passed by public meetings ten years before. 'This was the popular verdict then as to Mr. Lincoln's course,' said the *Ottawa Free Trader;*[2] 'the people of the State do remember it, and will "rebuke" it, when their ballots are to be deposited in November.' The taunts stung. Instantly the Republican paper at Springfield made hot reply[3] and continued it for several days. Lincoln had voted for supplies for the American troops, and, as to the Ashmun resolution, the war *was* a bad one.[4] Yet, on this particular matter and as a question of votes, it is obvious that the Democratic papers had the better of the argument, for they kept at it throughout the campaign with

[1] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 16, 1858. This and other Democratic papers had been attacking Lincoln's war record for some time, but the editorial quoted in the text was the most comprehensive and careful. Republican papers did not answer it, except that the *Chicago Press and Tribune* said that the Mexican War was unjust.

[2] July 23, 1858.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 17, 1858.

[4] *Ib.*, July 28, 1858.

aggressiveness and zest, while the Republican press was defensive, reluctant, and angry.

With all his handicaps Douglas was making headway. Thus far Lincoln and the Republicans were not holding up to the fight. Everywhere the Douglas men were rallying to their chief. The old line Whigs of Central and Southern Illinois who refused to follow Lincoln two years before, showed little sign of change of heart, although a few of them had come over to the Republicans, among them Gillespie, who was now running for the Legislature as a Republican in Lincoln's interest. But the Know-Nothings, now 'Americans,' were turning to Douglas. Gillespie, badly 'scared,' wrote to Lincoln a 'doleful letter.'

'We must not lose the district,' said Lincoln in reply. 'Lay hold of the proper agencies, and secure all the Americans you can, at once.' Lincoln had just come back from a series of conferences with Judd and the Republican managers in Chicago, and assured the frightened legislative candidate that 'other agencies' would be set to work to counteract the loss of the American vote. 'Don't fail to check the stampede at once.' Trumbull would soon come to his aid and 'I have reason to hope there will be other help of an appropriate kind.' [1]

A German editor of Alton, Theodore Canisius, who often wrote to Trumbull of his importance and need of money,[2] now advised the Senator that 'Mr. Lincoln is pretty sure to win.' [3]

[1] Lincoln to Gillespie, Springfield, July 25, 1858. *Works*, III, 192–3.

It was the same elsewhere: 'The battle of republicanism is now being fought in Minnesota, and the friends of liberty elsewhere must lend a helping hand — must afford *material aid*, . . . or it will be crushed in the onslaught.' A. Nourse (of Bath, Me.) to Trumbull, St. Anthony, Minn., July 24, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

From the first, Lincoln's hardest task was to get the support of both Know-Nothings and Germans. One party worker wrote to Trumbull that in his county (St. Clair) Republican candidates for the Legislature must not be Germans because the Americans would not vote for 'foreigners.' J. F. Alexander to Trumbull, Sept. 12, 1857. *Ib.*

[2] For instance, April 12, 1858, telling about his papers at Alton and Springfield, that he is hard up and must have help — and that Republican victory was as 'certain as daylight.' *Ib.* Both journals had short lives. The *Freie Presse* of Alton, established in 1858 by Canisius, was with the second isssue transferred to Christian Schneider, who conducted it about a year. The *Illinois Staats Anzeiger* did not appear in Springfield until June, 1859, and continued to be printed until Lincoln appointed Canisius in 1861 U.S. Consul at Vienna. The Springfield paper was made possible only by money advanced by Lincoln for press and types. See Barton, I, 421–3.

[3] Canisius, Alton, to Trumbull, July 19, 1858. Canisius bragged of his editorials; they were copied all over the country he said. Trumbull MSS.

Canisius is later to play a leading rôle for a brief moment in Lincoln's life, and then to become a concealed local force in his election to the Presidency.

The Administration forces were working hard against Douglas and in harmony with the Republican organization. In spite of his public repudiation of Buchanan's post-office inspector in Illinois, Charles Leib, as 'no man of ours,' that general agent of the 'National Democracy' reported to Trumbull: 'Douglas is . . . making a desperate effort to recover his position. . . . I am in correspondence with a number of gentlemen who are now openly with us, men who like myself will fight him to the *bitter end*. . . . In all the central counties and probably in all we [Administration Democrats] will have candidates for the Legislature. With the result we have nothing to do. . . . If the Republicans succeed in electing, the fault is that of the Douglas men.' [1]

Conservative New York papers could see no hope for Douglas; he himself knew that his chances were 'exceedingly slim.' The Democratic split and the confidence of the Republicans showed that they would win. Even if the Administration Democrats should go over to Douglas, he must lose; for the election of 1856 proved that there was 'a decided anti-democratic majority in Illinois.' [2] The truth was that Douglas had made a great mistake in fighting the President on the Kansas muddle: 'Had he sustained the President upon that issue . . . it would have placed him foremost in the front rank of his party for the Presidential succession.' [3] Even Greeley was sure that, since Douglas had made popular sovereignty his battle cry, 'he cannot fail to be beaten.' [4]

Undismayed, Douglas had assumed the offensive, as was his wont — he had taken charge as he said he would do,[5] and was

[1] Charles Leib, Chicago, to Trumbull, July 20, 1858. *Ib.* Leib tells Trumbull the program of the 'regular Democrats' — a speaker to trail Douglas; former Governor Reynolds had established a newspaper, the *Star of Egypt*, and was already 'firing hot shot into the Douglasites,' etc.

Incidentally, Leib suggested that Trumbull protect him from Douglas's charges: 'If a letter from most of the prominent Postmasters in the State . . . giving him the lie direct have no weight, I can only say, *let the axe fall*.'

[2] *New York Herald*, July 27, 1858. [3] *Ib.*, July 22, 1858.

[4] New York Weekly *Tribune*, July 12, 1858.

[5] Bloomington speech.

forcing the fighting. At the Douglas headquarters in Springfield, he and his State Chairman, John Moore, made up a list of speaking appointments and published it. They covered a great part of the State and included almost every day for many weeks. At once Lincoln and his committee arranged and announced counter meetings for him, some of them for the same day and place where Douglas was to speak, others for the same place on the following day.[1]

In New York, Trumbull had begun his assault on his colleague and was speeding westward; and the Republican press of the East was giving him more notice as the real antagonist of Douglas, saying almost nothing about Lincoln. 'Illinois, Trumbull and Douglas' ran the head lines of the *Boston Traveler*.[2] Moreover, Douglas in his speeches was now paying more attention to his colleague than to Lincoln.[3]

Douglas papers scoffed and raged at Lincoln's tactics in 'trailing' his opponent — that was the only way he could get a crowd, they said.[4] Republican managers, and voters too, were not heartened by the methods of their candidate — the offensive must be taken away from Douglas, and Lincoln alone could do it. They insisted that he challenge Douglas to a joint debate.[5] At the beginning of the fight, Greeley had suggested it in his long editorial on the Lincoln-Douglas speeches in Chicago.[6] First in Illinois to urge this aggressive course was Jesse Fell of

[1] Stevens, 551.

[2] As quoted by Professor Sparks in his 'Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858,' *Ill. State Hist. Coll.*, III; *Lincoln Series*, I, 58.

Some Illinois Republicans were for Trumbull for President in 1860. J. F. Alexander to Trumbull, Sept. 12, 1857. Trumbull MSS. G. Garland, Attila, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 20, 1858. *Ib.* Bryant thought Trumbull a better man than Lincoln: 'For Mr. Lincoln I know the people have great respect and great confidence in his ability and integrity. Still the feeling here is that you have filled the place . . . better than he could have done.' John H. Bryant to Trumbull, Feb. 12, 1857. *Ib.*

[3] Stevens, 552.

[4] And see *Era:* Cole, 169. Professor Cole says that his failure to get crowds and general complaints of his 'trailing' Douglas were the reasons for his challenge.

On Sept. 3, 1858, Lincoln wrote to William Fithian: 'My recent experience shows that speaking at the same place the next day after D[ouglas] is the very thing — it is, in fact, a concluding speech on him.' *Works*, III, 348.

[5] Herndon, II, 401.

[6] New York *Tribune*, July 12, 1858. 'We trust Messrs. Lincoln and Douglas will speak together at some fifteen or twenty of the most important and widely accessible points throughout the State.'

Bloomington, now Secretary of the Republican State Central Committee and one of the most unselfish friends Lincoln ever had.[1] Finally the *Chicago Press and Tribune* forced the issue. 'Let Mr. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln agree to canvass the State together, in the usual western style' — but doubtless Douglas would 'run away from him as he did in 1854.' [2]

At last, Lincoln yielded and went to Chicago to talk the matter over with the Republican State Chairman and other party strategists in that city. Douglas was there, too, getting ready to start on his long speaking tour already announced in the press. One week after the Springfield speech to which we have just listened, Lincoln wrote to Douglas: 'Will it be agreeable to you to make an arrangement for you and myself to divide time, and address the same audiences the present canvass? Mr. Judd, who will hand you this, is authorized to receive your answer; and, if agreeable to you, to enter into the terms of such arrangement.' [3]

Douglas was reluctant — such a debate would only advertise Lincoln to the country. 'Between you and me, I do not feel that I want to go into this debate,' he said to friends. 'The whole country knows me and has me measured. Lincoln, as regards myself, is comparatively unknown, and if he gets the best of this debate — and I want to say he is the ablest man the Republicans have got — I shall lose everything. Should I win, I shall gain but little. I do not want to go into a debate with Lincoln.' [4]

With unconcealed joy, the Republican press announced that Lincoln had sent the challenge, and intimated that Douglas would decline it and branded him as a coward if he should do so.[5] Since he must act, Douglas did so at once. On the day Lincoln's challenge was handed to him, he made answer; appointments for Democratic meetings had been made 'covering the entire period until late in October;' the people had been notified and Democratic candidates for Congress and other offices had arranged to be present, and they, with Douglas, would necessarily take up the whole time.

[1] Statement of James S. Ewing, Feb. 12, 1909. MS. Jesse Fell Memorial.

[2] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 22, 1858.

[3] Lincoln to Douglas, Chicago, July 24, 1858. *Works*, III, 189.

[4] Stevens, 553. [5] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 26, 1858.

To embarrass Douglas and confuse his supporters, the Republican press printed a story that he was about to withdraw so as to unite the Democrats on Justice Sidney Breese of the State Supreme Court, as the compromise candidate of the party.[1] The tale was a mere campaign trick, and Douglas now turned it against those who had invented and spread it. Assuming the falseness of the report and in that fashion thus advising his followers to that effect, Douglas also assumed that the plan to make Breese a third candidate was true. So he said to Lincoln:

'It has been suggested recently that an arrangement had been made to bring out a third candidate . . . , who, with yourself, should canvass the State in opposition to me, with no other purpose than to insure my defeat, by dividing the Democratic party for your benefit.' So if Douglas agreed to debate with Lincoln, it was more than likely that this other candidate, 'who has a common object with you,' would demand to speak at the same time, and thus 'he and you in concert might be able to take the opening and closing speech in every case.' [2]

Why had Lincoln waited until after Douglas's appointments had been made and published, if from the first he had intended

[1] *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 3, *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 14, *Alton Morning Courier*, July 17, *Chicago Democrat*, July 24, 1858, etc. Lincoln was in Springfield and Chicago when this story first appeared in the papers of those towns. Herndon to Trumbull, July 8, 1858, and Douglas's statement in this letter in answer to Lincoln.

Wentworth's paper made editorial note of the announcement of Breese's candidacy by the *Star of Egypt:* 'Judge Breese is a very strong man . . . his suffering his name to be used in this connection shows that the Buchanan men are fast gathering strength in all parts of the State. They have already, in this quarter, (Chicago and Northern Ill.) called around them the oldest veterans and choicest spirits of the party. . . . Poor Douglas!' *Chicago Democrat*, July 24, 1858.

Breese, who had been in the Senate with Douglas and had been defeated by Shields for a second term, had just been reëlected to the Supreme Court by a great majority. B. J. J. Hanna to Trumbull, Alton, Ill., Nov. 14, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

Breese was a man of uncommon ability, a fine lawyer and highly educated. He hated Douglas because of disagreements in the Senate and, especially, because Douglas did not come to his rescue when Shields beat him. Justice Breese was a staunch supporter of the Administration, and had been selected as the candidate of the 'regular' Democrats for the Senate in case the Legislature should have an anti-Douglas majority which, at this time, seemed to be certain. During the campaign Breese wrote three open letters against Douglas which were published in the 'regular' Democratic papers and the Republican press.

[2] The Eastern press took more notice of this point than of the whole Lincoln-Douglas correspondence. For instance: 'Mr. Douglas is a little afraid that the other democratic candidate may come into the arrangement and place the Little Giant between two fires — after the fashion of Maryatt's triangular duel.' *New York Herald*, July 30, 1858.

to ask for joint debates? Both men had been in Chicago for several days after Douglas returned; they had been together, too, at other places, notably at Springfield, 'where it was well known I went for the purpose of consulting with the State Central Committee, and agreeing upon the plan of the campaign.'

Although, under these circumstances, Douglas did not like to upset the arrangement of other Democratic candidates, already made and advertised, still he would take the responsibility in order to 'accommodate' Lincoln as far as he could. So let a place in each Congressional District, except the two where both had already spoken,[1] be agreed on — and Douglas suggested, as the most convenient towns, Freeport, Ottawa, Galesburg, Quincy, Alton, Jonesboro, and Charleston. As soon as possible he would talk with Lincoln about the dates and details, wrote Douglas; but where meetings had already been arranged by the Democratic State Committee, at any town where their debate was to take place, 'I must insist upon your meeting me at the time specified.'[2]

What 'a long-winded, pettifogging reply,' said Republican papers — 'The little dodger shirks, and backs out, except at half a dozen places which he himself selects! . . . The "little dodger" is afraid of "Long Abe" on the stump.'[3]

The Douglas press seized upon the point of Lincoln's delay in challenging Douglas. He had had time and to spare if he was so eager for the fray; why wait until Douglas's appointments had been made and advertised, why 'banter for battle' only when he knew Douglas could not meet him every day? But he had the chance now to debate seven times. 'If he was good for fifty or a hundred encounters, he certainly ought to be for seven.' At least, he would get crowds in that way; but would Lincoln accept?[4]

[1] The 2nd District, Chicago, and the 6th District, Springfield.

[2] Douglas to Lincoln, Chicago, July 24, 1858. *Works*, III, 189–92.

[3] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 28, 1858. 'He would rather go about the country like a strolling mountebank, with his cannon, todies and puffers, to shoot, cheer and blow for him, than to stand up to the work with a full grown man to confront him.' This editorial is very vindictive.

[4] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 29, 31, 1858.

He would and did. Five days later Lincoln, now at Springfield, wrote to Douglas as long a letter as Douglas had written to him. Though they had dined together the very day before, Lincoln did not know Douglas had made answer to his challenge, he claimed, until he saw it in the *Chicago Times* just before leaving for Springfield; only when he got home did he receive the original. That, he explained, was why he had not answered at once.

Douglas's 'insinuations' about Lincoln's 'unfairness' were unjust; he had never heard that a third candidate for the Senate was to be brought out — Douglas, himself, must have made that 'suggestion.' Surely Douglas had not 'deliberately' concluded that Lincoln and a third candidate were acting in concert to get openings and closings and thus entrap Douglas.

As to his delay in sending the challenge: 'I made it as soon as I resolved to make it.' Further, Lincoln declared that he had thought that perhaps Douglas would do so first, and had waited 'respectfully' to see. He did not know that Douglas went to Springfield to arrange his plan of campaign. Not until Douglas's appointments 'extending only to the 21st of August' were published, did Lincoln realize, 'for the first time,' that Douglas would not challenge him, and he then decided to challenge Douglas. So he had written to Douglas as soon as he could consult with friends 'satisfactorily.'

Lincoln said that it did not 'occur' to him that the debates would interfere with Douglas's appointments, since there were over two months of 'clear time,' after Douglas's last meeting as announced in the press. In a long paragraph, Lincoln pointed out the advantages Douglas had had over him at Chicago, Bloomington, and Springfield; but finally agreed to the places named by Douglas, and 'at your own times.' Lincoln added an important postscript that he would not again be at any of Douglas's 'exclusive meetings.' [1]

At last the dates were settled to begin at Ottawa, August 21, where Douglas was to speak at a Democratic meeting that day, he to open and close there, Lincoln to open and close the next

[1] Lincoln to Douglas, Springfield, July 29, 1858. *Works*, III, 193–6.

debate at Freeport, August 27, and so on — opening speeches to be one hour long, replies one hour and a half, rejoinder half an hour.[1] Lincoln complained that Douglas took 'four openings and closes to my three,' but agreed.[2] The junior partner was uneasy: 'I fear . . . that personalities will creep into the debates,' he wrote to Parker.[3] Prophetic words!

But all this was not done through formal letters sent by mail. We are here caught in another of those curious tangles that so often confuse the student of Lincoln's career. A spectator wrote to the *State Register*[4] that Douglas was on the road to Bement from Monticello where he had just spoken, and met Lincoln going there. In jocular humor, Douglas asked Lincoln to go back to Bement with him — he would give his opponent a bigger crowd there than Lincoln would find at Monticello. No, said Lincoln, he did not come to speak, but only to give Douglas the long letter already reviewed. But handbills had been posted on the trees where Douglas had just spoken and scattered over Monticello, announcing that Lincoln would follow Douglas — so he went on and spoke in the same grove soon after the Douglas meeting was over.

According to another story printed twenty-six years after the incident, Douglas saw Lincoln and his party coming from Bement. 'There comes Lincoln,' said Douglas, 'I wish to speak to him a moment.' When they came abreast, he spoke to Lincoln and asked: 'Did you receive my letter?' Lincoln said yes. What do you think of it? 'Favorably,' was the response; where could Lincoln see Douglas when he returned from Monticello? At the house of F. E. Bryant, at Bement, where he and Mrs. Douglas were stopping, said Douglas. So when Lincoln's Monticello meeting was over, he went back to Bement and in the parlor of the Bryant residence the two men arranged the dates and details of their joint meetings. In any case, it was at the Monticello-Bement meeting that Lincoln delivered in person his letter to Douglas dated at Springfield on the same day; and

[1] Douglas to Lincoln, Bement, Piatt Co., July 30, 1858. *Ib.*, 196–7.

[2] Lincoln to Douglas, Springfield, July 31, 1858. *Ib.*, 197.

[3] Herndon to Parker, Springfield, July 24, 1858. Newton, 186.

[4] 'Piatt,' writing from Monticello, Ill., July 29, 1858, in *Illinois State Register*, Aug. 2, 1858.

Douglas wrote the formal answer, as given in the text at Bryant's house next morning.[1]

The press on either side exalted its champion, and traduced his antagonist. Lincoln was the master, Douglas had tried to 'dodge,' he had refused to meet Lincoln everywhere because he was afraid of him, exclaimed the Republican papers.[2] Perhaps Lincoln might get people to listen to him now that he was to speak with Douglas; that was what he was after, retorted the Douglas organs. See how he had dogged the Senator's steps, going only where Douglas went and at the same time, if he could.

How impertinent for Lincoln to say that he had expected Douglas to challenge him! how absurd, how obviously false! Lincoln, a contestant for Douglas's place, and a poor one at that! Why on earth should Douglas do the challenging? Yet that was the reason Lincoln gave for his delay! Talk about 'dodging' — what was that but dodging, unless it was a plain lie? It was indeed both. So stormed the Douglas press.

It was 'silly' to say that the Little Giant was afraid: 'The idea that a man who has crossed blades in the senate with the strongest intellects of the country . . . and routed all opposition . . . dreads encounter with Mr. A. Lincoln is an absurdity.'[3] But the Republican rank and file 'cheered his [Lincoln's] name to the echo,' relates Carl Schurz;[4] at last their leader was going to fight at close quarters.

[1] *History of Bement*, Ill.: Geo. L. Spear, 1878.

Also statement of F. E. Bryant to F. M. Shonkwiler of Monticello who wrote an account similar to that of Spear. MSS. in possession of J. F. Sprague, Bement, Ill., present owner of the Bryant house, to whom the author is indebted for this data.

In the Shonkwiler narrative it is said that Bryant and his wife took Douglas and Mrs. Douglas to Monticello in the Bryant carriage, and on the way back to Bement met Lincoln and his party in a 'prairie schooner' and the arrangement to meet at Bryant's house was made as related by Spear; that Lincoln came to Bryant's house about eleven o'clock that night when all were in bed, rapped on the door until Bryant let him in; that Bryant then awakened Douglas who came downstairs in his night-shirt; and that he and Lincoln talked over the debates for half an hour in the parlor.

[2] 'We said from the first that Douglas would not dare canvass the State with Lincoln. He had run away from that gentleman in 1854. . . . If he dared not meet Lincoln in the first dawnings of his conspiracy to Africanise the American continent, of course he would object still more to such a canvass in 1858, when the evidences of that conspiracy are so numerous and overwhelming that even his audacity shrinks from denying it.' *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 29, 1858.

[3] *Illinois Daily State Register*, July 31, 1858. [4] Schurz, II, 88.

From this time on for the remainder of the campaign, the press of Illinois gives little or no aid to the searcher after truth. Both sides were violently partisan, both lied with that relish and audacity which at that time were thought to be required by true party zeal. Republican and Douglas papers said exactly opposite things of the very same meeting. According to one, Lincoln 'crushed' Douglas everywhere; according to the other, Douglas was everywhere triumphant. The reader of one paper would learn that Lincoln got all the applause, and read in the other paper that Douglas was greeted with storms of cheers which continued throughout his speech and became an ovation at the end. Lincoln 'captured' the crowd at every meeting and so did Douglas. One quaked, trembled, and almost fell beneath the blows rained upon him, and the other had an identical experience — all at the same meeting. The crowd was hot with enthusiasm or cold with indifference, according to the politics of the paper printing the story. Lincoln and Douglas processions were each always twice as long as the other. The student may search for months the partisan newspapers of the time and he will find that they agree on nothing except the weather and perhaps the size of the crowds.

For a distant approach to impartiality and truth, we must rely upon the outside press, and even those papers were infected. Now and then we have descriptions that are faithful, from some one on the ground who kept his head; and these, together with narratives of eyewitnesses written from notes taken at the time, but long after passion had cooled and honest judgment could be given, make up the scanty evidence upon which we have to depend.

Solely on their merits, the debates themselves deserve little notice. For the most part, each speaker merely repeated what he had said before. Few and unimportant were the points made to which we have not already listened more than once. But the debates served to advertise Lincoln to the country and thus made possible his nomination for the Presidency — or, rather, added the final and indispensable element which rendered that outcome certain.

Like all personal encounters, the debates drew the crowds,

appealed to the fighting instinct, aroused the followers of each champion to that pitch of emotion wholly without thought or sense, always displayed in any sort of close contest when the spectators have taken sides. The sporting quality of men, while not a major factor, must be kept in mind, when witnessing this or any hot political fight.

It may be helpful at this point to look at the combatants once more. Physically and mentally, Lincoln and Douglas were exactly opposite types. Douglas was short and thick-set, with great depth and breadth of chest, big round face, firm wide mouth, powerful square jaws, strong muscular neck, large and brilliant blue eyes, a mighty head and a deep voice. Lincoln was very tall and thin, with narrow chest and drooping shoulders, a long, slender, wrinkled neck, a lined and withered face, shrunken cheeks, small head, and shrill voice.

Lincoln was humorous and quizzical, indifferent to or forgetful of his clothes which never fitted, slow of thought and action, given to moods of melancholy broken by strange and sudden bursts of fun, and he was the best story-teller in the country. Douglas was cordial and dignified, alert, quick, and resourceful, careful of his dress; but he could not tell a story or crack a joke and never tried to do so.

As speakers the quality of both men is shown by what they said. Each was scrupulously honest, personally, although the followers of each denied that the other was overloaded with that virtue. Both were strong for the Union, both intensely patriotic, facts that we shall see emerge in flaming grandeur when the stern and decisive hour shall come.

Lincoln and Douglas were inordinately ambitious, politically; but Lincoln had for the most part failed, while Douglas had mounted on eagle's wings with never a let down, never a halt. In 1858 the name of Douglas was known to every man and woman in the whole land, while that of Lincoln, though familiar to Republican politicians in other States, had not been heard by the masses of the people outside of Illinois. The hold of Douglas on his followers everywhere was absolute. He was an idol to them; their devotion amounted to a frenzy; they acted as if under a spell.

'You were once a Douglas Democrat were you not?' was asked of one of his adherents many years after he died.

'Yes, by God, and I am a Douglas Democrat now,' came the answer, quick and sharp.[1]

And now Douglas needed this attachment and every resource he could command. Seldom in political history has any man faced a situation so desperate. All the power and prestige of the President of his party were against him. On one hand he was assailed by the Administration forces and old line Democrats who could not forgive even Douglas for breaking with his party in Congress; on the other hand by the Republican party of Illinois, fresh, eager, bellicose, and led by their ablest man.[2] His enemies were as hot against him as his friends were eager for him, and could find no words black enough to express their feelings. No one ever was indifferent to Douglas, no one even moderate; he was either loved or hated.

Then, too, hard times ground the people all over the State,[3] and, while nothing was said about them in the campaign, the psychological effect was the same that it always is. Worse still, crops in Illinois were 'almost a total failure,' as the editor of the

[1] The late Thomas R. Marshall, when Vice President, to Louis Howland and by him to the author, March, 1927.

'His followers loved to obey him for their love of the man.' Stevens, 422.

'About two-thirds of the voters of this county would vote for Douglas for anything that he would ask of them.' I. M. Grant, Mt. Vernon, Ill., to Trumbull, Sept. 15, 1857. 'The party almost unanimously swear by him.' John Tillson, Quincy, Ill., to Trumbull, Dec. 20, 1857. Joshua Guilford of Shelbyville, Ill., wrote to Trumbull, Dec. 27, 1857, that Douglas's friends would stick to him even when they knew him to be in the wrong and more earnestly when they believed him to be in the right. Most Democrats were for Douglas even more than for the Democratic Party. A. Kitchell (no place given) to Trumbull, Apr. 23, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[2] 'In the political world everybody's attention is absorbed by the canvass for the Illinois election . . . where Senator Douglas will have to struggle against a host of foes. . . . He will have to encounter the unrelenting hostility of his old friends, as well as of the Republicans. . . . This division in the ranks of the Democrats gives the Republicans a better chance of victory in Illinois than ever they have had before' and the defeat of Douglas 'would create the most tremendous "sensation" of latter days.' E. L. Godkin's despatch to the *London Daily News*, July 13, 1858. *Life of Edwin Lawrence Godkin:* Rollo Ogden, I, 177.

[3] 'Business still continues prostrate and collections difficult to make.' B. F. Barry, Alton, Ill., to Trumbull, Jan. 5, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

'Our market is dead. Not a single hog has yet been packed,' etc. Geo. T. Brown to Trumbull, undated 1858. *Ib.*

From April 1 to Oct. 1, 1858, there were seventy-two commercial failures in Illinois for $1,224,000. *New York Herald*, Oct. 14, 1858. And see *ib.*, Oct. 25, 1858, on continuance

Press and Tribune informed Trumbull; 'the times are gloomy and the prospect dull,' people complain of high taxes and big public expenses. Let Trumbull 'go into the finances of the Administration rough-shod.' [1]

For a quarter of a century Douglas had been in office continuously and for fourteen years he had necessarily spent most of his time in Washington. In visits to Illinois between sessions of Congress, he had seen as many people as he could at country fairs and other public gatherings, but this personal contact had been scant and brief. He had been able only to keep firm hand on the party organization and maintain close relations with Democratic politicians. Moreover, Douglas was said to have become a rich man since he went to Congress, and this was true, for he was far-seeing in business and had made wise investments in real estate; but a reputation for wealth, gained however honestly, while in office, is not helpful in a fight for votes.

Finally rumor had it that he was a drinking man, and this did not commend him to the 'temperance people,' who were numerous and active.[2] The fact that his wife went with him everywhere was, said the Republicans, to counteract the effect of his evil personal habits.

Mrs. Douglas threw herself into the campaign with an ardor equal to that of her husband. At every town, every village, she joined the Democratic women as one of them, and took cordial part in all they did. While her simple heartiness and charm had good effect on those whom she was able to meet in this fashion, it may be questioned whether her presence did not do Douglas more harm than good. Whether the crowds of country women, hard-working wives and daughters of hard-working farmers situated as they were at that day, and with the means of education then available, would be attracted rather than repelled by gazing at this exquisite, fashionably dressed woman from Washing-

of hard times in New York. Also New York *Tribune*, Jan. 22, 1858, on result of panic: 'Its disastrous effects have by no means been fully realized and proclaimed.'

'Why is it that business does not revive?' *New York Herald*, Oct. 18, 1858.

[1] C. H. Ray to Trumbull, Chicago, July 17, 1858. Trumbull MSS.

[2] In addition to demands for prohibition laws, some wanted Congress to prevent importation of liquor by a prohibitory tariff. J. D. Hartzler (speaking for 'temperance people' of Danville, Ill.) to Trumbull, Aug. 13, 1857. Trumbull MSS.

ton, is doubtful to say the least.[1] Worse still, she was a Roman Catholic, then a term of terror to most Protestants, especially in the rural districts. Douglas must be a Catholic, too, the Republican press had suggested soon after the wedding.[2] Protestant ministers had not forgiven Douglas — never did forgive him — for his attacks upon them and the Know-Nothings four years earlier,[3] and they were now an untiring force against him.

Political hurdles were also in Lincoln's way; but they were few and low compared with the obstacles that Douglas had to overcome. Chief of Lincoln's difficulties was the support of Douglas by Senator Crittenden of Kentucky, who, as we have seen, was the most eminent of the old line Whigs and Americans — their leader in fact.[4] He liked Douglas, admired his courage in fighting the Administration and was politically indebted to him for his ardent support of the Crittenden amendment. So the Kentucky Senator's great influence with the old line Whigs and Americans of Illinois, was thrown to Douglas. As a political matter, and that was all it then was, it is hard to see how Crittenden could have taken any other course.

The coolness of Eastern Republicans did not hurt Lincoln much. Indeed, their insistence before Lincoln was made the formal Republican candidate for Senator that Douglas should be reëlected helped Lincoln, for it angered Illinois Republicans to the fighting pitch. When Lincoln was put in the field, outside Republican opposition to him stopped.

As a matter of getting votes, Lincoln's advantage over Douglas was marked. He had the reputation of being a very poor man; the story of his humble birth, his early struggles, his self-extrication from the bog of misfortunes had been told innumer-

[1] After his Chicago speech, Douglas introduced his wife to Villard in Douglas's rooms in the hotel, and the young correspondent thus describes her: 'While we were talking, his newly-wedded second wife came in through a side door, and I was introduced to her. She was at once a most lovely and a queenly apparition. Indeed, it seemed to me that I had never seen a woman more beautiful in every way. Her tall figure was perfectly proportioned, and her every movement and gesture most graceful. She presented a marked contrast, in her youthful, blooming freshness and vivacity, to her small, dark, sombre husband.' Villard, I, 91–2.

[2] *Chicago Journal*, Dec. 2, 1856. [3] See Chap. IV of this volume.

[4] Crittenden's letter to T. Lyle Dickey in praise of Douglas was frequently printed by Democratic papers during the campaign. Lincoln admitted that the use of Crittenden's name had 'contributed largely' to his defeat. *Works*, V, 91.

able times, and did not grow less in the telling. Above all, the popular belief in his honesty counted heavily in his favor — 'Honest Old Abe,' the people called him. Most people had faith in what he said, had faith in the man. It was the strongest single personal factor in the campaign.

Then, while Douglas had been away most of the time, Lincoln had been at home all of the time. He had met the people at every session of the court in the counties of his judicial district, told stories to their liking, made hosts of friends. Whenever he could get a chance, he had made speeches and never failed to please the crowd. Neither on the circuit nor in speech-making trips did Mrs. Lincoln go with him. His sadness as well as his humor appealed to all who met him. From every point of view, Lincoln was a man of the people.

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT DEBATE

I have stood by my principles in fair weather and in foul, in the sunshine and in the rain. I have defended the great principles of self-government here among you when Northern sentiment ran in a torrent against me, and I have defended that same great principle when Southern sentiment came down like an avalanche upon me. . . . I knew I was right. DOUGLAS at Freeport, Aug. 27, 1858.

I confess myself as belonging to that class in the country who contemplate slavery as a moral, social, and political evil, having due regard for its actual existence amongst us and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations which have been thrown about it; but, nevertheless, desire a policy that looks to the prevention of it as a wrong, and looks hopefully to the time when as a wrong it may come to an end. LINCOLN at Galesburg, Oct. 7, 1858.

TERMS of the debates fixed, both men again took the stump. Everywhere Lincoln followed Douglas, speaking at the same place on the same day, or on the next. Sometimes he arrived while the Douglas meeting was going on, Republicans leaving the crowd about the speaker's stand to greet their hero with cheers. Even when Lincoln was not to speak, he went to hear Douglas whenever he could and mingled with the throng.[1]

According to the testimony of the chief organ of the party, the Republican campaign was planned with utmost care. Every move, every speech, was made with a definite purpose which had been thought out and agreed upon beforehand. Judging by his acts and words, Douglas did the same thing. His obvious course was to take and hold the offensive; no less important, he must stick to the issues as he had formulated them, and, above all, he must keep in good humor.

Just as obviously, Republican tactics required that Douglas should be put on the defensive, be diverted from his chosen is-

[1] For instance: at Clinton, DeWitt Co. 'I was standing in the crowd when he made his speech.' Lincoln's statement at Beardstown, Aug. 12, 1858. White's report in Herndon and Weik, II, 99.

sues, and, if possible, be made angry. All these things were attempted, but without success except as to the last. Douglas was goaded until his temper broke. On August 7, Trumbull, in Chicago, made a 'ferocious' speech. It was almost wholly a vituperative attack upon Douglas. Not a word did Trumbull say about Lincoln or for him.

Trumbull charged that in 1856, when the Kansas troubles were at their worst, Douglas had entered into a 'plot' to prevent the people of that Territory from voting upon a State Constitution. The Toombs bill of that year provided that the proposed fundamental law should be submitted to the people; but when the bill came out of Douglas's Committee, that clause was stricken out. This revelation was greeted by loud cheers. 'I will cram the truth down any honest man's throat, until he cannot deny it. [Renewed cheers.] And to the man who does deny it, I will cram the lie down his throat, until he shall cry enough. [Tremendous cheering.]' Yet Douglas was now claiming credit for defeating the Lecompton Constitution on that very ground, said Trumbull. 'It is the most damnable effrontery that man ever put on, to conceal a scheme to defraud and cheat a people out of their right, and then claim credit for it. [Cries, "Hurrah for Trumbull, hit him again. Down with all such men."]' [1]

Trumbull was repeating a charge made by the spokesman of the Administration in the Senate, William Bigler of Pennsylvania, early in the Lecompton fight. Douglas had forced Bigler to retract at the time.[2] The incident had been dramatic and with promise of another such scene as that when Douglas had castigated Sumner and Chase. Throughout the quarrel, Trumbull had listened in silence. But now on the stump he was bitter and bold. Presently we shall hear Lincoln reiterate Trumbull's charge.

Lincoln had twice repeated the Republican indictment of Douglas as a conspirator with two Presidents and the Supreme Court to spread slavery over the whole land; but, holding his

[1] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Aug. 8, 1858. Also campaign pamphlet issued by the National Republican Association in Washington, D.C.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Pt. I, 21–2, 113–22.

temper down, Douglas had treated it with tolerant indifference.[1] But now Trumbull and Lincoln combined at last aroused his wrath. As soon as Douglas read Trumbull's speech he denounced his colleague as a coward and a liar. 'The miserable, craven-hearted wretch, he would rather have both ears cut off than to use that language in my presence, where I could call him to account.' As to Lincoln's conspiracy charge, that, shouted the enraged Douglas, was simply 'an infamous lie.' [2]

The day after this outburst, Lincoln spoke at the same place. A big crowd, mostly old time Whigs,[3] was there. Lincoln's speech was one of the best he ever made, testifies White, who went with the Republican candidate everywhere as correspondent of the *Chicago Press and Tribune*. 'Taking it for granted that Judge Douglas was satisfied to take his chances in the campaign with the imputation of conspiracy hanging over him,' said Lincoln, he had renewed the charge at Springfield. Not until Douglas made his fourth speech of the canvass at 'a small town, Clinton' did he take notice of the indictment; and then all that he said was that '"self-respect alone prevented him from calling it a falsehood."'

So Lincoln again went over the items of the Republican indictment. 'I dare Judge Douglas to deny one of them. Let him do so and I will prove them by such testimony as will confound him forever.' It would be better if Douglas would refute specifically each count against him, said Lincoln, 'than to go vociferating about the country that possibly he may hint that somebody is a liar.' [4]

The day after the Beardstown speech, Lincoln, accompanied by the young newspaper man, went up the river on Douglas's trail, on the steamboat *Senator* to Havana. They arrived while Douglas was speaking, and the Chicago reporter went to the meeting, where an angry Republican told him that Douglas must have been drinking, 'because he had called Lincoln "a liar,

[1] See Douglas's Springfield speech of July 17, in Lincoln's *Works*, III, 121–2, 132.

[2] White's statement of Douglas's Beardstown speech, Aug. 11, 1858. Herndon and Weik, II, 95. 'I heard him.'

[3] *Ib.*, 96.

[4] White's report of Lincoln's Beardstown speech in Herndon and Weik, II, 100–1.

a coward, a wretch and a sneak."' So when Lincoln spoke next day, he said that he had been told that Douglas 'became a little excited, nervous (?) perhaps,' on the preceding day and talked about fighting Lincoln; and that a Douglas man in the crowd threw off his coat 'and offered to take the job off Judge Douglas's hands and fight Lincoln himself.' Lincoln declared that he would fight neither Judge Douglas nor his second. To fight would prove nothing, he said; and, moreover, Douglas did not really want to fight him. 'He and I are about the best friends in the world, and when we get together he would no more think of fighting me than of fighting his wife.' So 'we will call it quits.' [1]

On from place to place [2] went Lincoln and the *Press and Tribune* correspondent, 'still following on the heels of the Little Giant,' relates White, until August 21, when the first debate was to be held at Ottawa. Such then was the situation and such the temper of the two men and that of their partisans, when that contest took place. It should be borne in mind that Mrs. Douglas accompanied her husband everywhere, charming all she met. When he observed her at Havana, 'standing with a group of ladies a short distance from the platform on which her husband was speaking,' White declared: 'I thought I had never seen a more queenly face and figure. He saw her often thereafter during the campaign, he testifies, and believed that 'this attractive presence was very helpful to Judge Douglas in the campaign. It is certain,' continues White, 'that the Republicans considered her a dangerous element.' [3]

On August 21, 1858, the sun rose on a scene of commotion in the thriving town of Ottawa and the rich farm lands, thickly

[1] White's report of Lincoln's Beardstown speech in Herndon and Weik, II, 102–3. 'Lincoln says the Judge and he have always been friendly, as much so almost as man and wife; and as both man and wife should not get angry at once in a difficulty, he had determined, now that Judge D. was irritated, to keep in the best of humor. . . . He thought fighting an unprofitable business, it proved nothing; but he would adopt a plan that should prove who was right and who wrong; and in pursuing it, would neither give the lie nor so speak that any gentleman with the reputation, both State and National, of a U. S. Senator, could give the lie to him.' *Illinois State Journal*, Aug. 20, 1858.

[2] Lincoln spoke at Havana, Aug. 14, Bath, a town which, he reminded his hearers, he had laid out, or staked twenty-two years before, Aug. 16, Lewiston, Aug. 17, and Peoria, Aug. 19.

[3] White's statement in Herndon and Weik, II, 103–4.

settled, that surrounded it.[1] Daybreak revealed wagons filled with farmers and their families moving on every road that led to the little city. Here and there were buggies, and men and women came on horseback, too. Many were on foot. As time wore on, more vehicles, horsemen, and pedestrians filled the roads. Soon delegations and cavalcades appeared. Banners, mottoes, flags, floats, and other campaign devices advertised the purpose of the outpouring. The day was hot, the dirt roads very dry, dust rose in thick clouds. By ten o'clock Ottawa was in a haze. But the town was full of noise. Cannon roared, bands played, rural fife and drum corps rattled and shrilled, men shouted and hurrahed. Hurrah for Lincoln! Hurrah for Douglas! Hurrah for Old Abe! Hurrah for Little Dug! Peddlers hawked their wares — Douglas badges, Lincoln badges, hurrah!

Mounted marshals and their aids, elaborate sashes about their waists, dashed to and fro, arranging rival processions to greet and escort their respective chiefs. Nor were the two leaders neglectful of the dramatic. Lincoln came on a special train of fourteen cars crowded with shouting Republicans. It arrived about noon and when the Republican champion alighted a dense crowd sent up such loud and repeated cheers that 'the woods and bluffs rang again.' Into a carriage which the 'fair young ladies of Ottawa' had decorated with evergreens and mottoes climbed Lincoln, and, preceded and followed by military companies, bands, and other units of the political parades of the time, was taken through crowded streets to the house of Mayor Glover, where once more, three 'mighty' cheers were given.

Douglas came from Peru in a grand carriage drawn by four 'splendid' horses. Four miles from Ottawa a reception committee of several hundred horsemen bearing flags and banners met him and escorted him to town. Once more artillery thundered, martial music blared, excited partisans cheered. With utmost difficulty the Douglas carriage and escort made their way through the shouting throng to the Geiger House. The scene quite overcame the correspondent of the *Philadelphia Press* who reported that Douglas 'came like some great deliverer, some

[1] The population of La Salle Co. was 48,272. Ottawa had 6522 people and South Ottawa 1026. *Census.* 1860.

mighty champion who had . . . saved a nation from ruin;' and that the tremendous acclaim from the crowd, repeated again and again, 'seemed to rend the very air.' [1]

At two o'clock the debate began. The crowd filled the square, swarmed over the platform, climbed upon the covering above it. For a long time the reporters could not get places on the stand. Douglas, the light of battle in his eye, looked 'imperiously' over the assemblage, tossing back his heavy mane; Lincoln appeared to be placid and humble. It was a big assemblage; at least twelve thousand people were there.

For the most part Lincoln and Douglas, at Ottawa, in the debates thereafter, and, indeed, throughout the campaign, made the same arguments and statements of fact, to which we have already listened several times. So we shall now and hereafter attend only to the points that were new, or to such old ones, as, newly made, attracted the attention of the country and influenced votes.

In opening the debate Douglas told of the deal between Trumbull and Lincoln in 1854, to dissolve the old Whig and Democratic parties and form the Republican Party, as that deal had been exposed in 1855 by Lincoln's friend, James H. Matheny. Then Douglas read a platform which, he said, had been adopted by the Republican State Convention at Springfield in 1854 — the first Black Republican Convention ever held in Illinois. As we have seen, it was to escape this convention that Lincoln had hastily left that town. Recalling an attack in the House on this platform by Representative Thomas L. Harris,[2] Douglas had written to the editor of the Democratic organ at Springfield for a copy of it; and Lanphier had brought to Ottawa a file of his paper containing the Republican resolutions. But they were not

[1] *Philadelphia Press*, Aug. 26, 1858, in *Debates:* Sparks, 124–6. At this point the radical differences in the newspaper reports become conspicuous. The Douglas papers said that there was no enthusiasm when Lincoln came; the Republican papers declared that such as was shown for Douglas 'was almost wholly confined to Irish Catholics.' *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Aug. 23, 1858. *Ib.*, 134.

On the other hand the *Philadelphia Press*, a Douglas paper, after describing the triumphal entry of Douglas into Ottawa, said: 'How different the enthusiasm manifested for his competitor, Mr. Lincoln; or as he had termed himself, "the living dog." As *his* procession passed the Geiger House there was scarcely a cheer went up. They marched along silently and sorrowfully, as if it were a funeral *cortège* following him to the grave.'

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 1274.

those actually adopted by the Republican State Convention at Springfield in 1854; instead they were resolutions adopted by the Kane County Republican Convention at Aurora, and a duplicate of those passed by most Republican meetings in Northern Illinois at that time. The Springfield platform had been greatly toned down in order to get Lincoln and other old line Whigs into the new party. But Douglas did not then know of this difference, nor, as we shall now see, did Lincoln know of it.

The Aurora resolutions pledged the new party to repeal the Fugitive Slave Law, to prevent the admission of slave States to the Union, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, to prevent the acquisition of more territory unless slavery was forever excluded from it.[1]

As Douglas read them, shouts of approval arose. 'Black Republicans' might cheer, cried Douglas, but they could not get Lincoln to endorse these pledges. '[Laughter and applause. "Hit him again."]' Yet those resolutions stated the Republican position now — see how the 'Black Republicans cheered them as good Black Republican doctrines!' So let Lincoln answer whether he was pledged to those Republican propositions to-day — and Douglas asked Lincoln specific questions based on the platform he had read.

Lincoln must not evade these questions, Douglas said, but answer now, 'in order that, when I trot him down to lower Egypt, I may put the same questions to him. [Enthusiastic applause.] My principles are the same everywhere. [Cheers, and "Hark."] I can proclaim them alike in the North, the South, the East, and the West. My principles will apply wherever the constitution prevails, and the American flag waves. ["Good," and applause.] I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln's principles will bear transplanting from Ottawa to Jonesboro.'[2]

He meant nothing disrespectful or unkind to Lincoln, said Douglas; and he briefly recounted their long mutual acquaintance and early struggles. 'I was a school-teacher in the town of Winchester, and he a flourishing grocery- [saloon] keeper in the town of Salem. [Applause and laughter.]' Both young men had gone to the Legislature, related Douglas. 'He was then just as

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 89. [2] *Ib.*, 90.

good at telling an anecdote as now. ["No doubt."] He could beat any of the boys wrestling, or running a foot-race, in pitching quoits or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all the boys of the town together; [uproarious laughter] and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse-race or fist-fight . . . won the praise of everybody that was present and participated. [Renewed laughter.] I sympathized with him because he was struggling with difficulties, and so was I.'

Then Douglas told how Lincoln dropped from sight after he left the Legislature but 'turned up as a member of Congress' when 'the Abolition tornado swept over the country. . . . Whilst in Congress, he distinguished himself by his opposition to the Mexican war, taking the side of the common enemy against his own country; ["that's true"] and when he returned home he found that the indignation of the people followed him everywhere, and he was again submerged, or obliged to retire into private life, forgotten by his former friends. ["And will be again."]' Then Lincoln emerged once more and helped make the abolition platform that Douglas had just read.

And Trumbull! He who tried to repudiate most of the State debt of Illinois! 'I walked into a public meeting in the hall of the House of Representatives, and replied to his repudiating speeches, and resolutions were carried over his head denouncing repudiation, . . . ["Good" and cheers.] Trumbull's malignity has followed me since I thus defeated his infamous scheme.' [1]

Then Douglas took up Lincoln's house-divided speech: Lincoln had said that the Government could not exist half slave and half free. '[Neither can it.]' Why not? asked Douglas. Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, and the great men of that day made it so, 'and left each State perfectly free to do as it pleased on the subject of slavery. ["Right, right."] Why can it not exist on the same principles on which our fathers made it? ["It can."]' Douglas then went on to make the arguments with which we are so familiar, until told that his time was up; and 'three times three cheers' were given for him when he closed.

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 91–2.

When Lincoln rose to make reply, his partisans, who outnumbered those of Douglas two to one, said the Republican press, cheered him so loudly for several minutes that he could not be heard. He denied the deal between himself and Trumbull '[cheers;]' but said that he had no doubt that Douglas had been '*conscientious*' in repeating the falsehood. Of course Lincoln had nothing to do with the Republican resolutions which Douglas had read, he asserted. True, Lovejoy, 'who is here upon this stand,' had 'tried to get me into it, and I would not go in, [cheers and laughter.] . . . I went away from Springfield when the Convention was in session, to attend court in Tazewell County.' The Republicans had put his name upon their Committee, but he had refused to attend its meetings, 'and I never had anything to do with that organization.'

Lincoln did not then make answer to the questions which Douglas had put to him. He did so at the next debate, however, as we shall see, and asked counter questions. This delay was typical of Lincoln's slow and sure-footed methods.

In reply to Douglas's charge of abolitionism, Lincoln read long extracts from his Peoria speech of 1854.

'Put on your specs,' cried a man in the crowd.

'Yes, sir, I am obliged to do so; I am no longer a young man,' responded Lincoln, and the crowd laughed.

That, insisted Lincoln, was all that he ever had said about slavery and 'the black race;' and to argue from that, that he therefore believed in negro equality, was 'but a specious and fantastic arrangement of words, by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse. [Laughter.]' He was as much for white supremacy as Douglas was, whenever the necessity of choice arose.

'There is a physical difference between the two [races] which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together on the footing of perfect equality.' But that was no reason for denying the negro the natural rights stated in the Declaration. '[Loud cheers.] I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. . . . He is not my equal in many respects. . . . But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal, and the

equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man. [Great applause.]'

Douglas was mistaken about Lincoln's having been a grocery-keeper. '[Laughter]'; but 'I don't know as it would be a great sin, if I had been. . . . Lincoln never kept a grocery anywhere in the world. [Laughter.] It is true that Lincoln did work the latter part of one winter in a little still-house, up at the head of a hollow. [Roars of laughter.]' [1]

As to the Mexican War: 'You remember I was an old Whig, and whenever the Democratic party tried to get me to vote that the war had been righteously begun by the President, I would not do it. But whenever they asked for any money, or land-warrants, or anything to pay the soldiers there, . . . I gave the same vote that Judge Douglas did. [Loud applause.]' [2]

Thereafter Lincoln's speech, like that of Douglas, was a repetition of former ones. As to his house-divided speech: 'I had no thought in the world that I was doing anything to bring about a war between the Free and Slave States.' Lincoln had a great deal to say about Douglas having called him 'a kind, amiable, and intelligent gentleman,' always bringing roars of laughter from the crowd. He went over, at much length, the charge of conspiracy to extend slavery over the country and asked Douglas if he had not said outright, that the charge was a falsehood.

'The Judge nods to me that it is so. . . . I know the Judge is a great man, while I am only a small man, but *I feel that I have got him.* [Tremendous cheering.] . . . If the evidence proves the existence of the conspiracy, does his broad answer denying all knowledge, information, or belief, disturb that fact? It can only show that he was used by conspirators, and was not a leader of them. [Vociferous cheering.] . . . I do not say that I *know* such a conspiracy to exist,' but '*I believe it.*'

Here Lincoln made a point more important than all the rest of his speech together; for it led directly to the famous question which he put to Douglas at Freeport six days later. As we have seen, the Administration organ at Washington had attacked Douglas violently for opposing the Lecompton Constitution,

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 102. [2] *Ib.*, 103. See Chaps. VII and VIII, Vol. I, of this work.

had read him out of the Democratic Party, had called him a renegade, a deserter, a traitor. When closing the Lecompton debate in the Senate, Douglas had struck back at the paper, quoting from a long editorial in it that State laws prohibiting slavery were unconstitutional, and denouncing that statement, made in connection with the Lecompton Constitution, as 'a *fatal blow* to the sovereignty of the States.' [1]

Lincoln read that part of Douglas's Senate speech, and said that it was the very same charge against the Administration which Lincoln had made against Douglas, 'that he thinks I am so corrupt for uttering.' We must bear in mind that the Administration organ was continuing to assail Douglas as fiercely as ever and that Administration Democrats in Illinois were doing the same thing. Nothing could have been devised better calculated to keep open the Democratic split than this manœuvre of Lincoln, while at the same time it confounded the retort of Douglas at Clinton to Lincoln's conspiracy charge: 'I did not suppose there was a man in America with a heart so corrupt as to believe such a charge could be true. I have too much respect for Mr. Lincoln to suppose he is serious in making the charge.' Yet Douglas had done the same thing himself in the Senate. Serious! Did Douglas think that Lincoln was making so grave a charge 'in fun? [Laughter.]'

In view of Douglas's own conduct, let him say 'how corrupt a man's heart must be to make such a charge! [Vociferous cheering.]' [2] Presently, at Freeport, we shall hear Lincoln follow up his advantage.

There was no danger of war between the States over slavery, asserted Lincoln. Douglas was helping to prepare the people for the nationalization of slavery, by upholding the first Dred Scott decision as a 'Thus saith the Lord' in order that the people would accept the second decision in the same spirit. 'It needs only the formality of the second Dred Scott decision, which he endorses in advance, to make slavery alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.' [3] Lincoln's peroration was a paraphrase of Clay's speech as president

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong. 1st Sess., Appendix, 199–200.

[2] *Debates:* Sparks, 110–3. Italics Lincoln's. [3] *Ib.*, 113–6.

of the National Colonization Society delivered almost a decade before the Abolition assault began; Douglas was now doing all that Clay — 'my *beau ideal* of a statesman, the man for whom I fought all my humble life' — had then condemned.[1] Lincoln stopped a quarter of an hour before his time was up.

Amid much confusion and angry interruptions Douglas began his rejoinder. He recalled the scene in the State House at Springfield in October, 1854, when Ichabod Codding had come in at the close of Lincoln's speech and asked all Republicans to go over to their convention in the Senate Chamber. At this point exclamations came from the crowd until the Chairman of the Republican Committee rebuked his fellow partisans.[2] Lincoln, too, broke in on Douglas in an angry and excited manner, reported all but the Republican press.[3] Lincoln had never denied, said Douglas, that the Republican resolutions just read, expressed his sentiments, although 'this has been published on Mr. Lincoln over and over again. [Three cheers.]'

Lincoln's denial that he acted on the Republican Committee was 'a miserable quibble to avoid this main issue,' cried Douglas. See how he had dodged the questions. Was he for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law? Not on the Committee. If elected to the Senate, would he vote against the admission of a slave State? Not on the Committee — up in Tazewell County. Would he vote to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia? No answer. Would he vote against acquiring territory unless slavery were excluded from it? No answer. 'He knows I will trot him down to Egypt. [Laughter and cheers.] I intend to make him answer there, ["That's right"] or I will show the

[1] 'Henry Clay once said of a class of men who would repress all tendencies to liberty and ultimate emancipation, that they must, if they would do this, go back to the era of our Independence, and muzzle the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return; they must blow out the moral lights around us; they must penetrate the human soul, and eradicate there the love of liberty; and then, and not till then, could they perpetuate slavery in this country! [Loud cheers.]' *Debates:* Sparks, 116.

[2] 'I hope no Republican will interrupt Mr. Douglas. The masses listened to Mr. Lincoln attentively, and, as respectable men, we ought now to hear Mr. Douglas, and without interruption.' *Ib.*, 117.

[3] 'Two of the Republican committee here seized Mr. Lincoln, and by a sudden jerk caused him to disappear from the front of the stand, one of them saying quite audibly, "What are you making such a fuss for? Douglas didn't interrupt you, and can't you see that the people don't like it?"' *Ib.*, 118.

people of Illinois that he does not intend to answer these questions.' [1]

From the crowd a Republican cried: 'How about the conspiracy?'

But, for a moment more, Douglas drove home Lincoln's refusal to answer the questions put to him — basic questions now up for discussion and settlement, insisted Douglas. 'Without an excuse for refusing to answer these questions, he sat down long before his time was out. [Cheers.]'

Douglas had paid no attention to Lincoln's 'playful' figure of speech about Stephen, James, Franklin, and Roger, he said, because he did not object to Lincoln's throwing his arguments together in any style he liked; but when he said that he intended, in that way, to charge corruption and conspiracy against Douglas, the Supreme Court, and two Presidents of the United States, Lincoln became offensive. How, now, did Lincoln evade responsibility for so terrible an accusation? By declaring that although he did not know the charge to be true, still since Douglas had not denied it, he would charge the conspiracy as a fact, and thus Lincoln had accused Douglas of 'moral turpitude.' In order that Lincoln should have no excuse for doing so again on the ground that Douglas had been silent, Douglas branded it 'in all its bearings, an infamous lie. ["Three cheers for Douglas."]'

Amid almost continuous cheering and laughter, Douglas repeated his denial of the conspiracy charge: 'I know it to be false, and nobody else knows it to be true. . . . I will say that it is a lie, and let him prove it if he can. . . . Mr. Lincoln has not character enough for integrity and truth, merely on his own *ipse dixit*, to arraign President Buchanan, President Pierce, and nine Judges of the Supreme Court, not one of whom would be complimented by being put on an equality with him. ["Hit him again," "three cheers," etc.]' [2]

Explaining the reasons for voting down the Chase amendment, and for including the word 'State' in the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Douglas swung into an attack on Lincoln's house-divided doctrine which, insisted Douglas, 'will inevitably bring

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 118–20. [2] *Ib.*, 121–2.

about a dissolution of the Union,' but stopped when told that his time was up.

So came to an end the first of the debates. Here, for the last time, we must make note of the opposite accounts of the partisan press on both sides. According to the Republican papers, Douglas, discomfited and crushed, left the stand, his followers chagrined at his defeat; while Lincoln was borne away in triumph on the shoulders of stalwart young Republican farmers, surrounded by exulting thousands. The Douglas papers declared that their hero left the stand amid the prodigious enthusiasm of the multitude which, cheering wildly, followed him to the hotel; while Lincoln, the picture of despair, stood quaking on the platform until some sturdy Republicans took him on their shoulders 'and preceded by a band, and surrounded by a lonesome squad of fifty or a hundred, tailed in after the mass of people,' who had gone with Douglas. 'This funereal escort passes through the crowd and bore Mr. Lincoln to his quarters, . . . with his long arms about his carriers' shoulders, his long legs dangling nearly to the ground.'[1]

In such a spirit the fight raged on. It soon became more heated and theatrical than any political contest ever waged in the country. In comparison, the frenzied campaign for Frémont was pallid and calm. Trumbull, Lincoln, Lovejoy, Washburne, and Republican speakers of lesser note assailed Douglas from every stump. The negro orator, Frederick Douglass, came to Illinois and joined in the assault. The Administration Democrats grew more active and vicious. The Republican papers, in flaming headlines and blazing articles and editorials, denounced the resolutions read by Douglas at Ottawa, as a forgery; they had been adopted at Aurora, not at Springfield. Douglas knew that they were fraudulent when he read them. Indeed, he and his man Friday, Lanphier, had conspired to put them in the Democratic organ in Springfield in 1854 — therefore Douglas himself was a forger. '*Forgery!*' screamed the Republican press. '*Forgery!*' shouted the Republican stump speakers.

Exasperated and doubtful, but showing no sign of irritation or fear, Douglas wired Usher F. Linder of Charleston: 'The hell-

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 124–45.

hounds are on my track. For God's sake, Linder, come and help me fight them.' The operator sold a copy of the telegram to the Republicans who published it. Anti-Douglas men rocked with laughter. They had him — the Little Giant was done for! And poor Linder! Thereafter as long as he lived, he was called 'For-God's-sake-Linder.'

But not all the friends of Lincoln were pleased with his conduct at Ottawa. Parker thought his evasions of Douglas's questions unmanly. 'Mr. Lincoln did not meet the issue,' the Boston preacher wrote to Herndon; 'he made a technical evasion; "he had nothing to do with the resolutions in question." Suppose he had not, admit they were forged. Still they were the vital questions pertinent to the issue, and Lincoln dodged them. That is not the way to fight the battle of freedom.' [1]

Before the second debate, held at Freeport, Lincoln spoke in Henry, Augusta, and Macomb. At the last place his speech was 'conversational rather than formal . . . especially effective.' Next morning, August 26, he rambled about the little town, and had his picture taken at a small daguerreotype gallery. This is the famous Macomb ambrotype, and because it was not leaded or touched up, is undoubtedly the best likeness of Lincoln as he looked at that time. In the afternoon, he took the train for Amboy, making a short speech and remaining there for the night.[2]

During the six days between the Ottawa and Freeport debates Lincoln had prepared answers to the questions which Douglas had put to him; and he had decided to ask counter questions on which he had been thinking for several weeks. One of these questions — the second in order — and Douglas's answer to it were to be made historic by later events. That question was:

'Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?' [3]

[1] Parker to Herndon, Boston, Sept. 9, 1858. Newton, 208.

[2] White, in Herndon and Weik, II, 109, mentions, on hearsay, a conference held at Dixon, on Aug. 26, between Lincoln and some Chicago supporters; but the fact that Lincoln passed that night at Amboy is against such a conference, and White doubtless had in mind the talk with Medill and others on the train the following day.

[3] *Debates:* Sparks, 152.

On the train to Freeport Lincoln handed his questions to Joseph Medill, who had joined him somewhere on the road, asking his newspaper friend what he thought of them, a usual practice of political speakers who are also candidates, then and to this day. Medill objected to the second question; it would let Douglas out of the tight place he was in on the slavery question. Lincoln was obdurate. He intended 'to spear it at Douglas that afternoon,' he said. The Republican candidate for Congress from that District, Elihu B. Washburne, and the Republican State Chairman, Norman B. Judd, had come to Freeport for the big meeting. When Lincoln and Medill arrived, Medill told them about Lincoln's purpose. Both were worried, went to Lincoln's room where he was washing his hands and face, and tried to get him to drop, or at least to change, the question. Lincoln would not yield. Other Republican leaders protested in vain.[1]

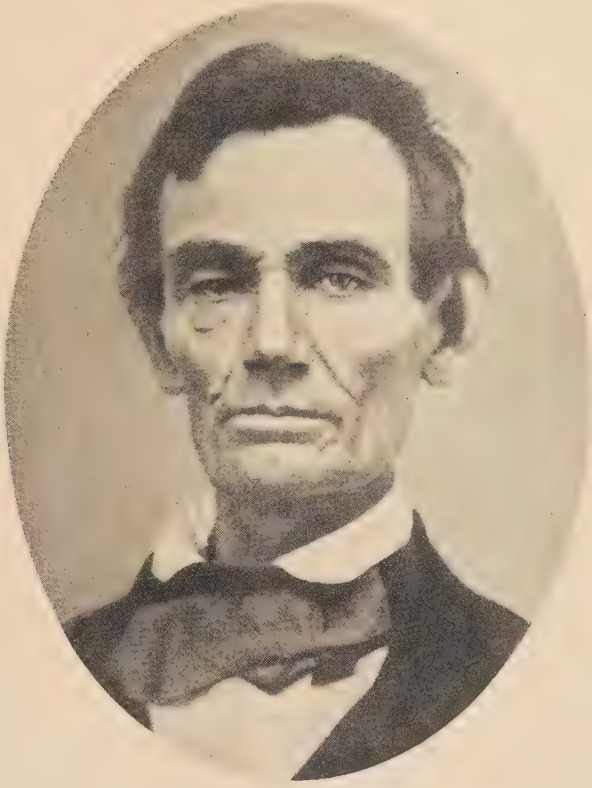
In the campaign biographies of Lincoln, written two years later, in the heat and flurry of the presidential contest, and when he was the Republican candidate for President, the story first appeared that Lincoln and other party leaders held a grave conference over the question and, when told that it and the reply Douglas was sure to make, would lose Lincoln the Senatorship, Lincoln said: 'I am after bigger game. The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this.' No evidence has yet been discovered that anything of the kind took place. Nor was there reason for such a momentous discussion, and especially none for the exercise by Lincoln of that superhuman foresight attributed to him.

Everybody knew what answer Douglas would make. Lincoln himself had heard his antagonist say in two speeches that without friendly legislation slavery could not exist in the Territories or anywhere else,[2] and Lincoln had read other speeches of Douglas in which he had said the same thing.[3]

[1] Medill's statement, *Chicago Tribune*, May 9, 1895, in *Debates:* Sparks, 203–6.

[2] Douglas's Springfield speech, June 12, 1857, and his Bloomington speech, July 16, 1858.

[3] Douglas's Springfield speech, July 17, 1858, and his Senate speech in 1850, in which he had expounded at length the same doctrine. As has been seen, James L. Orr of South Carolina, now Speaker of the House, and other Southern leaders, had stated the fact in stronger terms than Douglas ever made use of, that local legislation was indispensable to slavery; only a few days before the Freeport debate, Jefferson Davis, in a much talked of speech at Portland, Maine, had made identical assertions, but Davis claimed the



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1858
The ambrotype made at Macomb, Illinois

The South was already beginning to move against the idea that local laws could exclude slavery from the 'common territory' of the Nation, the extremist press of the South was spurring that movement on, and, most important of all in its effect on the Democratic split in Illinois, the national organ of the Administration took the same view.

So there was an excellent reason, applicable to the campaign then raging in Illinois, for Lincoln to put this question to Douglas at that particular moment. In doing so Lincoln showed common sense and political skill. That practical and immediate reason Lincoln himself gave at the time. The most striking feature of the Illinois contest was the split in the Democratic Party. It was Douglas's chief danger, Lincoln's chief hope, and both men knew it. Earnest efforts had been made and were then being made by Douglas, his lieutenants, and by party leaders from other States, to close the breach in the Democratic ranks. The plain Republican policy was to keep that breach open, and, if possible, widen it.

Lincoln, then, did not ask his celebrated Freeport question merely to hurt Douglas in the South. It was not his own idea; he had been pondering over it a long time. As soon as it was known that the debates would take place, Henry Asbury, a lawyer of Quincy and an ardent Republican, had urged Lincoln to ask Douglas this very question, in various forms; and on the same day that he closed the arrangement for the contest, Lincoln had written to Asbury about the question and the answer which Douglas surely would make to it:

SPRINGFIELD, *July* 31, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR: Yours of the 28th is received. The points you propose to press upon Douglas he will be very hard to get up to, but I think you labor under a mistake when you say no one cares how he answers. This implies that it is equal with him whether he is injured here or at the South. That is a mistake. He cares nothing for the South; he knows he is already dead there. He only leans Southerward more to keep the Buchanan

extracts taken did not fully represent his views. *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist:* Dunbar Rowland, III, 344–6.

party from growing in Illinois. You shall have hard work to get him directly to the point whether a territorial legislature has or has not the power to exclude slavery. But if you succeed in bringing him to it — though he will be compelled to say it possesses no such power — he will instantly take ground that slavery cannot actually exist in the Territories unless the people desire it, and so give it protection by territorial legislation. If this offends the South, he will let it offend them, as at all events he means to hold on to his chances in Illinois. You will soon learn by the papers that both the judge and myself are to be in Quincy on the 13th of October, when and where I expect the pleasure of seeing you. Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.[1]

Such then was Lincoln's view at the time. Douglas's purpose was to 'keep the Buchanan party from growing in Illinois,' and that purpose must be overcome. Nothing could do that so well as to put Douglas once more into conspicuous antagonism to the growing Southern tendency with which the President was in sympathy. So, at last, Lincoln decided to include Asbury's question with those he had himself devised for the same end — to keep open the democratic split. It was good political strategy, and in keeping with Lincoln's practical mind which always was intent on the task immediately before him, whatever that task might be. Even more characteristic of Lincoln was the long delay in making up his mind and his unmistakable firmness when that was done.

Again we are fortunate in having a clear and obviously impartial and accurate account by one who was there, of how Lincoln and Douglas looked in this campaign. Ingalls Carleton, a Lincoln man, thus describes them as he saw them at Freeport:

'Lincoln was tall and ungainly with a lean face, homely and sorrowful looking, while Douglas was short and fat, easy in manner and his full face appeared to be that of a man whose life had been one of success and sunshine.

'Douglas was dressed in what might have been called plantation style. He was richly dressed. He wore a ruffled shirt much

[1] *Works*, III, 197–8.

in style in wealthy and aristocratic circles those days, a dark blue coat buttoned close with shiny buttons, light trousers and shiny shoes, with a wide brimmed soft hat like the prosperous politicians of the southern part of Illinois wear to this day [1908]. He made a picture fitted for the stage.

'Lincoln wore that old high stovepipe hat with a coarse looking coat with sleeves far too short, and baggy looking trousers that were so short that they showed his rough boots. The Douglas men laughed at him and said he would be a nice looking object to put in the senate and to tell the truth the Lincoln men couldn't brag much on their man for exhibition purposes.' [1] Before the debate, Lincoln and Douglas, in response to calls from the crowd before the hotel, came out on the balcony, arm in arm, and bowed several times.[2]

The speakers' stand was only a block or two from the hotel. Lincoln got into a big Conestoga farm wagon, filled with farmers, and rode, while the multitude cheered this symbolism of his kinship with the common man. When Douglas saw Lincoln in the lumbering old farm wagon, he decided to go the short distance on foot. The platform was low and small, with hardly room upon it for the speakers and reporters. The weather was chill and damp, but the crowd was even bigger than that at Ottawa, fully fifteen thousand having come to see the fight. They were overwhelmingly Republican, of strong Abolition tendencies and bellicose in feeling and spirit.

Lincoln opened the debate. He first made answer to the questions which Douglas had asked him at Ottawa, and he did it in a curious way, thoroughly characteristic of his cautious and precise nature. He repeated the exact words of each of Douglas's questions, and then, except for the sixth question, again restating Douglas's exact words, said in each of his answers, that he was not '*pledged*' to do what Douglas had asked him. Having taken some time in this fashion, Lincoln put his answers in direct form.

[1] Carleton's statement in *Debates:* Sparks, 206–7.

[2] *Ib.* 'I must say that Douglas made the most graceful bow. It seemed natural for him to bow. Lincoln bowed awkwardly and appeared to be more awkward in comparison with the gracefulness and ease of Douglas. Douglas accepted the plaudits of the people as one who felt that they belonged to him or at least that was the way it seemed.'

Under the Constitution, said Lincoln, 'the Southern States are entitled to a Fugitive-Slave Law.' So he had nothing to say about the existing law except that, 'without lessening its efficiency,' it should have been framed so as 'to be free from some of the objections to it.' But why talk about it, since the amendment or repeal of that law was not being urged now? 'I would not be the man to introduce it as a new subject of agitation upon the general question of slavery.'

As to the admission of more slave States, Lincoln said that he 'would be exceedingly sorry ever to be put in a position of having to pass upon that question;' he would be 'exceedingly glad' if none were ever brought into the Union '[Applause]'; but if slavery was kept out of a Territory until it was ready and applied for statehood, then if, in that situation, the people should 'do such an extraordinary thing as to adopt a slave constitution, . . . I see no alternative, if we own the country, but to admit them into the Union. [Applause.]' [1]

He would also be 'exceedingly glad' to see slavery abolished in the District of Columbia, said Lincoln, to cries of 'Good!' 'Good!' from the crowd. 'Yet as a member of Congress, I should not, with my present views, be in favor of *endeavoring* to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, unless it would be upon these conditions: *First*, that the abolition should be gradual; *second*, that it should be on a vote of the majority of qualified voters in the District; and *third*, that compensation should be made to unwilling owners. With these three conditions, I confess that I would be exceedingly glad to see Congress abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, "sweep from our capital that foul blot upon our nation." [Loud applause.]'

These were precisely the ideas expressed in Lincoln's proposed slavery bill when in Congress, and the restatement of them ten years later well illustrates the tenacity with which he held to a thought or plan.

Lincoln would not commit himself on the abolition of the slave trade between different States. 'I am *pledged* to nothing about it,' he insisted. 'It is a subject to which I have not given

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 150.

that mature consideration that would make me feel authorized to state a position so as to hold myself entirely bound by it. In other words, that question has never been prominently enough before me to induce me to investigate whether we really have the constitutional power to do it.' But even if he thought that Congress did have that power, he should still not be in favor of its exercise 'unless upon some conservative principle as I conceive it, akin to what I have said in relation to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.' [1]

Of course he was for the exclusion of slavery from all the Territories wherever situated; it was 'the *right* and *duty* of Congress' to prohibit it, he had said in his formal, written replies to Douglas's questions. As to new territory: 'I am not generally opposed to the honest acquisition of territory; and, in any given case, I would or would not oppose such acquisition accordingly as I might think such acquisition would or would not aggravate the slavery question among ourselves. [Cries of "Good! good!"]'

There, said Lincoln, were his views and he would stand by them everywhere. If there was a place in the State where those opinions would make him enemies, it was right there in Freeport, he declared.[2]

Then Lincoln asked Douglas his counter questions: Would Douglas vote to admit Kansas if its people should adopt a State Constitution before they were as numerous as required by the English bill? Could the people of a Territory lawfully exclude slavery before they formed a State Constitution? If the Supreme Court should 'decree' that the States themselves could not exclude slavery, would Douglas favor acquiescence in such a decision 'as a rule of political action?' Was Douglas for the acquisition of a new Territory regardless of how it might 'affect the nation on the slavery question?' Applause came increasingly to these questions as Lincoln read them.[3]

Amid bursts of laughter, cheering, and shouts of pure glee from the delighted crowds, Lincoln with great skill attacked Douglas for having said at Ottawa that the resolutions he read were those of the Springfield Convention of 1854 when, in fact,

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 151. [2] *Ib.*, 149, 151–2. [3] *Ib.*, 152.

they were those of a Convention in Kane County, and when Lincoln had no more to do with either than if they had been 'passed in the moon.' Yet Douglas, twelve years a Senator, and not an ordinary Senator, but one with a name of 'world-wide renown,' had made an assertion 'which the slightest investigation would have shown him to be wholly false.' Lincoln could account for it only on the ground that Douglas's evil genius had at last deserted him — that evil genius which had so favored Douglas all his life, 'as to lead very many good men to doubt there being any advantage in virtue over vice.' The crowd laughed and cheered, and cheered and laughed again and again.[1]

And this was the man who charged that Trumbull and Lincoln were guilty of falsehood. Could Douglas find in anything that Trumbull or Lincoln had said, 'a justification at all compared with what we have, in this instance, for that sort of vulgarity. [Cries of "Good! Good!"]'

The remainder of Lincoln's opening was devoted to his favorite charge that Douglas and the Democrats had voted down the Chase amendment to 'leave room' for the Dred Scott decision.[2] Douglas had inveighed at 'the enormity of Lincoln — an insignificant individual like Lincoln' — in having 'upon his *ipse dixit*' charged conspiracy on two Presidents, the Supreme Court, and a majority of Congress; but, said Lincoln, he had made no charge on his '*ipse dixit*'; he had only 'arrayed the evidence tending to prove it.' But Douglas himself had made the same charge against the Administration and his fellow Democrats for supporting the Lecompton Constitution. Having occupied his full time, Lincoln stopped.

He was glad, began Douglas, that, at last, Lincoln had decided to answer the questions put to him at Ottawa — he had shown no disposition to do so at that place. Those questions were based upon the Republican platform, whereas the questions which Lincoln had just put to Douglas had never 'received the sanction of the party with which I am acting,' but came solely from Lincoln's 'curiosity. ["That's a fact."]'

Why did not Lincoln say what *he* would do about admitting

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 152–4. [2] *Ib.*, 155–8.

Kansas with insufficient population, before asking what Douglas would do in such a case? For Trumbull, who was supporting Lincoln, had voted against admitting Oregon during the whole of the last session of Congress on that very ground. Was Lincoln fighting Trumbull on that issue? '["Good, put it to him," and cheers.]'

But he would answer, said Douglas, and he made the statement to which we have listened so often, that 'as she [Kansas] has population enough to constitute a Slave State, she has people enough for a Free State. [Cheers.]'

Then Douglas made his celebrated reply to Lincoln's second question: 'I answer emphatically, as Mr. Lincoln has heard me answer a hundred times from every stump in Illinois,[1] that in my opinion the people of a Territory can, by lawful means, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution. [Enthusiastic applause.] Mr. Lincoln knew that I had answered that question over and over again. He heard me argue the Nebraska bill on that principle all over the State in 1854, in 1855, and in 1856, and he has no excuse for pretending to be in doubt as to my position on that question.

'It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to introduce it or exclude it as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere, unless it is supported by local police regulations. ["Right, right."]

'Those police regulations can only be established by the local legislature; and if the people are opposed to slavery, they will elect representatives to that body who will by unfriendly legislation effectually prevent the introduction of it into their midst. If, on the contrary, they are for it, their legislation will favor its extension. Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be on that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a Slave Territory or a Free Territory is perfect

[1] This was the campaigner's usual exaggeration. While Lincoln may have heard Douglas state his friendly legislation doctrine often, it is only known positively that he heard it twice and read it twice.

and complete under the Nebraska bill. I hope Mr. Lincoln deems my answer satisfactory on that point.' [1]

So once more Lincoln had drawn Douglas into a renewal of his warfare with the Administration — once more he had caused Douglas to open the old wounds.

Douglas was 'amazed' he said, that Lincoln should ask his third question — whether, if the Supreme Court should decide that a *State* could not exclude slavery from its own limits, Douglas would 'submit to it.' An auditor exclaimed: 'A schoolboy knows better.' Yes, said Douglas, 'a schoolboy does know better.' Lincoln knew that there was only one man in America 'claiming any degree of intelligence or decency, who ever for a moment pretended such a thing.' That man was the editor of the *Washington Union*, Douglas stated; and when he had said so, in his paper, Douglas had promptly denounced it in the Senate, while 'Lincoln's friends, Trumbull, and Seward, and Hale, and Wilson, and the whole Black Republican side of the Senate, were silent. They left it to me to denounce it. [Cheers.]'

Toombs of Georgia had rebuked Douglas at the time, he said, because the *Union* editorial was not worthy of notice; and Toombs had declared 'that there was not one man, woman, or child south of the Potomac, in any Slave State, who did not repudiate any such pretension. Mr. Lincoln knows that that reply was made on the spot, and yet now he asks this question.'

The question was unthinkable! Lincoln 'might as well ask me, Suppose Mr. Lincoln should steal a horse, would I sanction it, [Laughter] and it would be as genteel in me to ask him, in the event he stole a horse, what ought to be done with him. He casts an imputation upon the Supreme Court of the United States, by supposing that they would violate the Constitution of the United States. I tell him that such a thing is not possible. [Cheers.] It would be an act of moral treason that no man on the bench could ever descend to. Mr. Lincoln himself would never [even] in his partisan feelings so far forget what was right as to be guilty of such an act. ["Good, good."]' [2]

Lincoln's question about acquiring new territory was 'very ingeniously and cunningly put,' said Douglas. ['Now we've got

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 161–2. [2] *Ib.*, 163–4.

him,' Deacon Bross, then one of the owners of the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, remarked in a low voice.] Was Lincoln himself opposed to it 'under any circumstance?' The 'Black Republican creed' expressly made that pledge — did Lincoln stand by that pledge? Instead of answering directly and simply, Lincoln, 'Yankee-fashion,' asks Douglas the same question in a different form. But Douglas would not thus dodge, he said; 'I answer that whenever it becomes necessary, in our growth and progress, to acquire more territory, that I am in favor of it, without reference to the question of slavery; and when we have acquired it, I will leave the people free to do as they please, either to make it slave or free territory as they prefer. [Here Deacon Bross spoke; the reporter believes that he said, "That's bold." It was said solemnly.]' [1] Then Douglas launched into his favorite appeal for territorial expansion, an argument and a prophecy that time and events have strangely fulfilled.

Had Lincoln more questions? 'As soon as he is able to hold a council with his advisers, Lovejoy, Farnsworth, and Fred Douglass, he will frame and propound others. ["Good, good." Renewed laughter, in which Mr. Lincoln feebly joined, saying that he hoped with their aid to get seven questions, the number asked him by Judge Douglas, and so make *conclusions* even.]' [2]

When Douglas again uttered the words 'You Black Republicans,' protests came from the crowd — 'White, white,' some yelled. Like a flash, Douglas seized the incident as an excuse to make his negro equality plea; and in dramatic fashion he did it. 'I have reason to recollect that some people in this country think that Fred Douglass is a very good man. The last time I came here to make a speech, while talking from the stand to you, people of Freeport, as I am doing to-day, I saw a carriage — a magnificent one it was — drive up and take a position on the outside of the crowd; a beautiful young lady was sitting on the box-seat, whilst Fred Douglass and her mother reclined inside, and the owner of the carriage acted as driver. [Laughter, cheers, cries of "right," "what have you to say against it," etc.] I saw this in your own town. ["What of it?"]

'All I have to say of it is this, that if you, Black Republicans

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 164. [2] *Ib.*, 165.

think that the negro ought to be on a social equality with your wives and daughters, and ride in a carriage with your wife, whilst you drive the team, you have a perfect right to do so. ["Good, good," and cheers, mingled with hooting and cries of "white, white."]

'I am told that one of Fred Douglass's kinsmen, another rich black negro, is now traveling in this part of the State, making speeches for his friend Lincoln as champion of black men. ["White men, white men," and "What have you to say against it?" "That's right," etc.] All I have to say on that subject is, that those of you who believe that the negro is your equal and ought to be on an equality with you socially, politically, and legally, have a right to entertain those opinions, and of course will vote for Mr. Lincoln. ["Down with the negro," "no, no," etc.]'[1]

At great length, Douglas went into the mistake made by him at Ottawa about the place where the Republican resolutions read by him had been adopted. He told how the error came to be made, and said that he did not then know differently, nor did Lincoln, who had not denied at the time that the resolutions were those of the Springfield Convention 'and evidently thought that they were; . . . but not a word is said about his ignorance on the subject, whilst I, notwithstanding the circumstances, am accused of forgery.'

The Republican excuse for that, said Douglas, was that the resolutions had not been adopted on the '"*right spot.*" [Laughter and applause.] Lincoln and his political friends are great on "*spots.*" [Renewed laughter.] In Congress, as a representative of this State, he declared the Mexican war to be unjust and infamous, and would not support it, or acknowledge his own country to be right in the contest, because he said that American blood was not shed on American soil in the "*right spot.*" ["Lay on to him."] And now he cannot answer the questions I put to him at Ottawa because the resolutions I read were not adopted on the "*right spot.*"'[2]

What quibbling! What a trivial excuse for evading the real issue! For, contended Douglas, those very resolutions had been adopted in nearly all the Northern counties and Congressional

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 165–6. [2] *Ib.*, 166–8.

Districts that gave Republican majorities in the election that year, and that were depended upon to give Lincoln his majorities at the election this year. Amid a tumult of shouting, laughter, cheers, and hostile and friendly cries, Douglas read and made comment upon resolutions adopted by the Rockford Republican Convention of 1854 at which Washburne had been nominated for Congress from that very District — the Freeport District. They were almost identical with the Aurora resolutions. 'When I get into the next district, I will show that the same platform was adopted there, and so on through the State, until I nail the responsibility of it upon the back of the Black Republican party throughout the State. ["White, white," "three cheers for Douglas."]

'*A Voice:* Couldn't you modify it, and call it brown? [Laughter.]'

Thomas J. Turner, Speaker of the House when Trumbull beat Lincoln for the Senate — Tom Turner, a Democratic renegade, Douglas had just called him — who was now one of the moderators of the Freeport meeting and was on the platform, spoke up and said that he had drawn the Rockford resolutions. '[Hurrah for Turner: Hurrah for Douglas.]' Then he would not deny that they were the Republican creed, cried Douglas.

'*Mr. Turner.* — "They are our creed exactly." [Cheers.]

'*Mr. Douglas.* — And yet Lincoln denies that he stands on them. ["Good, good," and laughter.]'

Again Douglas recounted the Democratic version of the Lincoln-Trumbull deal for the Senate, Trumbull's defeat of Lincoln by 'cheating' him, the anger of Lincoln and his friends and, 'to keep them quiet,' the pledge that Lincoln should have the Senatorship next time: 'Lincoln could not be silenced in any other way.'

Many of 'you Black Republicans' did not know about that, exclaimed Douglas. '["White, white," and great clamor.] I wish to remind you that while Mr. Lincoln was speaking there was not a Democrat vulgar and blackguard enough to interrupt him. [Great applause and cries of, "Hurrah for Douglas."] . . . I have seen your mobs before, and defy your wrath. [Tremendous applause.]'

Douglas read the Republican resolutions offered by Lovejoy in the Legislature the day before Trumbull was elected to the Senate. They, too, contained the same propositions that were in the Aurora resolutions, and, cried Douglas triumphantly, every man but two who had voted for those Lovejoy resolutions had also voted for Lincoln for Senator on the very next day. Let Turner, 'who stands by me,' and who was pledged to vote for no man for Senator unless he was committed to that 'Black Republican platform [Cries of "White, white," and "Good for you."]' — let Turner testify.

'I now ask Mr. Turner [turning to Mr. Turner], did you violate your pledge in voting for Mr. Lincoln, or did he commit himself to your platform before you cast your vote for him? [Mr. Lincoln here started forward and grasping Mr. Turner, shook him nervously and said "Don't answer, Turner, you have no right to answer."]' [1] Turner did not answer.

Douglas made much fun of the vagueness and qualifications of Lincoln's answers to the questions Douglas had put to him: 'Why can he not speak out, and say what he is for, and what he will do? [Cries of "That's right."]' Although Lincoln thought that the admission of more slave States would dissolve the Union, yet he would not say that he would vote against bringing another slave State into the Union, declared Douglas. 'I ask you if that is fair dealing? . . . Show me that it is my duty in order to save the Union, to do a particular act, and I will do it if the Constitution does not prohibit it,' cried Douglas; thus stating the exact course which Lincoln took to achieve that end during the war. 'I am not for the dissolution of the Union under any circumstances.' But Lincoln said that 'this Union cannot continue to endure with Slave States in it,' and still would not say what he would do about admitting more of them!

'I will retire in shame from the Senate of the United States when I am not willing to be put to the test in the performance of my duty. I have been put to severe tests. ["That is so."] I have stood by my principles in fair weather and in foul. . . . I have defended the great principles of self-government here among you when Northern sentiment ran in a torrent against

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 171–6.

me, [A voice, "That is so."] and I have defended that same great principle when Southern sentiment came down like an avalanche upon me. I was not afraid of any test they put to me. . . . [Cries of "Good," cheers and laughter.]' [1]

Suppose he did charge the Administration organ with corruption, 'when it was true,' did that justify Lincoln in charging two Presidents, the Supreme Court, and others with corruption, when it was false? asked Douglas. Lincoln's conspiracy charge was 'historically false' and he knew it, Douglas went on. Buchanan was in London as Minister to Great Britain before, during, and after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, so he could not have been in Lincoln's imaginary conspiracy; the Dred Scott case was not even on the docket of the Supreme Court when that legislation was enacted, so the members of that tribunal could not have been among Lincoln's mysterious conspirators; 'as to President Pierce, his high character as a man of integrity and honor is enough to vindicate him from such a charge; [laughter and applause] and as to myself, I pronounce the charge an infamous lie, whenever and wherever made, by whomsoever made. I am willing that Mr. Lincoln should go and rake up every public act of mine, . . . speech delivered . . . and criticise them; but when he charges upon me a corrupt conspiracy for the purpose of perverting the institutions of the country, I brand it as it deserves.'

Why this attempt to make it appear now that Douglas was still at war with Buchanan? 'When I differed with the President, I spoke out so that you all heard me. ["That you did," and cheers.]' He would do it again if need be, shouted Douglas. But that question had 'passed away,' and the President had said in his message that, hereafter, all State Constitutions ought to be submitted to the people. 'I know Mr. Lincoln's object: he wants to divide the Democratic party, in order that he may defeat me and get to the Senate.' Told here, that his time was up, Douglas 'stopped on the moment.' [2]

The sporting blood of his supporters now eager and hot, Lincoln was greeted with 'vociferous cheers,' when he arose. If the crowd showed no 'vulgarity and blackguardism' when he was

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 177–9. [2] *Ib.*, 180–1.

speaking, said Lincoln, *he* had used no 'vulgarity and blackguardism' when they were listening. '[Laughter and applause.]' The Republican resolutions of 1854 that Douglas had cited or read, were 'local, and did not spread over the whole State,' and therefore did not represent nor bind the entire party, as such. 'We at last met together in 1856, from all parts of the State, and we agreed upon a common platform.' If anything was then yielded it was for 'practical purposes,' in order that all might unite against measures which all opposed. So all Republicans were bound, 'as a party, *to that platform.*'

If Douglas could find one member of the Legislature who voted for Lincoln in 1855 and was 'determined to have pledges from me: . . . who will tell him anything inconsistent with what I say now, I will resign, or rather retire from the race, and give him no more trouble,' exclaimed Lincoln, and the crowd applauded.

He had made no secret pledges and Douglas need not fear that he would say or do anything in Washington that he did not proclaim on the stump, said Lincoln amid laughter. 'I'll tell you what he is afraid of. *He is afraid we'll all pull together.* [Applause and cries of "We will! We will!"]' [1] He had answered Douglas's questions as fairly as he knew how, insisted Lincoln. The admission of a single slave State would not 'permanently fix the character and establish this as a universal slave nation.'

The remainder of Lincoln's rejoinder was devoted to Douglas's charge against the *Washington Union* — it was really against the President, Lincoln repeated. At that time, Douglas 'had an eye farther north than he has to-day;' but now he was again looking toward the South. '[Laughter and cheers.]' His hope then was to make 'the great "Black Republican" party . . . the tail of his new kite;' but now he was 'crawling back into his old camp,' and he would finally be found in 'full fellowship' with those he then fought, and with whom he now pretended to be at 'such fearful variance. [Loud applause, and cries of "Go on, go on."] I cannot, gentlemen, my time has expired.' [2]

Lincoln had 'TUMBLED DOUGLAS ALL OVER STEPHENSON

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 182–3. Italics Lincoln's. [2] *Ib.*, 185–8.

COUNTY,' said the Republican *Press;*[1] the Freeport contest was a 'SECOND ROUT FOR LINCOLN,' exulted the Douglas papers.[2] Among themselves, the Republican politicians felt badly, while the Douglas men were encouraged. Such were the methods of the two men in debate, such their manner and appearance, such the temper of the crowds, such the utterly contradictory nature of accounts in the partisan press of both sides. In the debates thereafter, a new point was made now and then; but, for the most part, the stump duel became an exhibition of dexterity — bold and quick thrusts, sure and cautious parrying, blows in return to be avoided with skill.

Lincoln kept Herndon busy looking up records, newspaper files, and the like and sending them to the senior partner. On a sleepy September day the rivals met at Jonesboro, Union County, 'an ancient village in the heart of Egypt, among hills and ravines, and invested with forest as the soil itself.'[3] Only twelve or fourteen hundred people were there, nearly all Democrats, a fact that 'evidently embarrassed' Lincoln.[4] Donati's comet was flaming, and, the night before the meeting, Lincoln gazed at it for an hour, as most other people did, too.

In the debate next day [the 15th] Lincoln said that he was bound by the Constitution to let slavery alone in States where it already was and would do so anyway, 'even if there were no such Constitutional obligation.'[5] He made good use of material sent him by the junior partner. Since Douglas had insisted that Lincoln was bound by resolutions of local Republican Conventions with which Lincoln had had nothing to do, what about similar resolutions adopted by Douglas followers in the past? — and Lincoln read two platforms adopted by Democratic Congressional Conventions in Illinois, an extract from a Democratic newspaper and a set of questions to a Democratic candidate

[1] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Aug. 30, 1858.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, Sept. 1, 1858.

[3] Chester P. Dewey, special correspondent *New York Evening Post*, Jonesboro, Ill., Sept. 15, in issue Sept. 22, 1858, quoted in *Debates:* Sparks, 261.

[4] *Ib.*, 262. White says Union County was a stronghold of the Buchanan Democrats, and was the cause of a want of enthusiasm for Douglas in the audience. Herndon and Weik, II, 118.

[5] *Debates:* Sparks, 229.

and his answers, all to the same effect as the Republican resolutions which Douglas had read and all in 1850. Was Douglas bound by them?

Douglas made instant answer that, at the time, he had denounced one Democratic candidate as 'no democrat;' and he said that the other would 'have been beat to death' if his 'abolition' answers to the 'abolition questions had been known — they having been published only two days before the election and, even then, in but one county.'

If slave-holders in a Territory should need and ask for Congressional legislation to protect their property, would Douglas vote for it? asked Lincoln in his fifth question to Douglas. To 'immense cheering' Douglas made answer that non-intervention by Congress was 'a fundamental article in the Democratic creed.'[1]

How could Territorial Legislatures pass laws 'unfriendly' to slavery, or even refuse to pass friendly laws, since every member took an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and since in the Dred Scott case the Supreme Court had held that the Constitution guaranteed property in slaves? asked Lincoln. Douglas made his old answer that since the Supreme Court had placed its decision on the ground that 'slave property is on an equal footing with other property,' Territorial Legislatures would, of course, treat it like other property — liquor for instance.[2]

At Charleston, September 18, Lincoln was in a county where old line Whigs were thick. Nearly thirty years before, Lincoln with the Hanks-Hall-Lincoln families had gone through the hamlet, and now across the main street the Republicans had stretched an immense banner with a painting of 'Old Abe' as he looked when driving the wagon then. By different routes Lincoln and Douglas came from Mattoon, a little town ten miles distant, each followed by a long procession to which additions were made on the way. The Lincoln procession was led by the 'Bowling Green Band' of Terre Haute, Indiana.[3] More numer-

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 246, 256.

[2] *Ib.*, 242, 258.

[3] *Ib.*, 267.

ous than ever before were banners, mottoes, flags, 'beautiful young ladies dressed in white' on grandly decorated floats. Both sides did all they could to catch the old line Whigs. One Republican legend attracted so much notice that it has found a place in history:

> 'Westward, the star of Empire takes its way,
> The girls *link-on* to Lincoln, as their mothers did to Clay.'[1]

The crowd was even larger than that at Freeport.

Lincoln began his speech by repeating what he had said before on Douglas's issue of negro equality; but he now said it in stronger words and at the very start, and, it must be admitted, he went much farther than he ever had gone. When we read what he said at Charleston, we must have in mind the place where he spoke and the views of most who heard.

'While I was at the hotel to-day,' began Lincoln, 'an elderly gentleman called upon me to know whether I was really in favor of producing a perfect equality between the negroes and white people. [Great laughter.] . . . I will say, then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races; [applause] that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people. . . .

'And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race.'[2]

Lincoln had no fear, he said, that he or his friends would marry negroes, 'if there was no law to keep them from it [laughter];' but since Douglas and his friends did fear 'that they might, if there was no law to keep them from it, [roars of laughter] I give

[1] Charleston Correspondence, *New York Evening Post*, Charleston, Coles Co., Ill., Sept. 18, in issue of Sept. 21, 1858, quoted in *ib.*, 320.

Other versions are, after the first line:

'The Girls *Link-on* to Lincoln — Their mothers were for Clay.' Charleston Correspondence, *Chicago Democrat*, Sept. 18, in issue Sept. 22, 1858, quoted in *ib.*, 317. 'The Girls all link to Lincoln, as their Mothers linked to Clay.' Charleston Correspondence, *Chicago Journal*, Sept. 18, in issue Sept. 20, quoted in *ib.*, 324.

[2] *Debates:* Sparks, 267–8.

him the most solemn pledge that I will to the very last stand by the law of this State, which forbids the marrying of white people with negroes. [Continued laughter and applause.]' [1]

The remainder of Lincoln's speech was on Trumbull's Chicago attack on Douglas, which Trumbull had repeated with increased animosity at Alton, and from which Lincoln read.

So a great deal of Douglas's time was taken up in making answer again to Trumbull's charge. This Douglas did specifically and from the record.[2] 'Why did not he [Trumbull] speak out as boldly in the Senate of the United States, and cram the lie down my throat when I denied the charge, first made by Bigler, and made him take it back? . . . ["He was afraid."]' [3] In beginning his speech, however, Douglas said that he had supposed the purpose of the debates to be to discuss the issues of the day. 'Let me ask you what questions of public policy, relating to the welfare of his State or the Union, has Mr. Lincoln discussed before you?' But, continued Douglas, 'I am glad that I have at last succeeded in getting an answer out of him upon this question of negro citizenship and eligibility to office, for I have been trying to bring him to the point on it ever since this canvass commenced.' [4]

Lincoln's speech was proof, said Douglas, of the plan to divert him from the questions of the campaign. 'He has devoted his entire time to an issue between Mr. Trumbull and myself, and has not uttered a word about the politics of the day.' [5] Lincoln's practice of keeping on making a charge which had been proved to be false, as in the instance of the Trumbull accusation, was shown, said Douglas, in his reiteration of the 'conspiracy' charge with reference to the Dred Scott decision. When Douglas had pointed out that the case was not even on the docket of the Supreme Court until long after the Kansas-Nebraska Act had passed, Lincoln had asserted that 'there was an understanding between the Democratic owners of Dred Scott and the Judges of the Supreme Court and other parties involved, that the case should be brought up. I then demanded to know who these Democratic owners of Dred Scott were. He could not or would not tell; he did not know.'

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 268. [2] *Ib.*, 282–9. [3] *Ib.*, 283–4. [4] *Ib.*, 281. [5] *Ib.*, 286.

Douglas asserted that there were 'no Democratic owners of Dred Scott on the face of the land. [Laughter.] Dred Scott was owned at that time by the Rev. Dr. Chaffee, an Abolition member of Congress from Springfield, Massachusetts, and his wife; [immense laughter and applause] and Mr. Lincoln ought to have known that Dred Scott was so owned, for the reason that as soon as the decision was announced by the Court, Dr. Chaffee and his wife executed a deed emancipating him, and put that deed on record. [Cheers.] It was a matter of public record, therefore, that at the time the case was taken to the Supreme Court, Dred Scott was owned by an Abolition member of Congress, a friend of Lincoln's and a leading man of his party, while the defence was conducted by Abolition lawyers — and thus the Abolitionists managed both sides of the case.

'I have exposed these facts to Mr. Lincoln, and yet he will not withdraw his charge of conspiracy. I now submit to you whether you can place any confidence in a man who continues to make a charge when its utter falsity is proven by the public records.' In view of all these facts, how could he have 'conspired' with men who were not in any conspiracy themselves? asked Douglas. 'I am willing to trust to your knowledge of me and my public conduct without making any more defense against these assaults. [Great cheering.]' [1]

He would make no charges against any candidate, said Douglas, except to repel attacks upon himself. 'If Mr. Lincoln is a man of bad character, I leave you to find it out; if his votes in the past are not satisfactory, I leave others to ascertain the fact; if his course on the Mexican War was not in accordance with your notions of patriotism and fidelity to our own country as against a public enemy, I leave you to ascertain the fact.' [2]

See how shifty 'this great Free-soil Abolition party' was! They would not even call themselves by the same name in different parts of the State. '["They dare not."] . . . What object have these Black Republicans in changing their name in every county? ["To cheat the people."]' In Northern counties, they called themselves Republicans, in the Central counties they dared not use that name but merely called upon all the enemies

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 289–91. [2] *Ib.*, 291.

of the Democracy to unite, while in lower Egypt they adopted the title of the 'Free Democracy.'[1] Now at Charleston, Douglas pressed this point with effect:

'Their principles in the north are jet-black, [laughter], in the center they are in color a decent mulatto, [renewed laughter] and in lower Egypt they are almost white. [Shouts of laughter.]' A house divided against itself cannot stand! Well, look at the Republican Party![2]

As to the American Nation, why could it not stand as the fathers made it and as it had stood and grown great for all those glorious decades since it was founded? asked Douglas and 'stopped on the minute, amidst deafening applause.'[3]

Acclaim as loud and long greeted Lincoln when he got up to close. An answer in half an hour to a speech of an hour and a half, must be a hurried one he said. Douglas had never before asked him if he favored negro citizenship '[Applause]; he shall have no occasion to ever ask it again, for I tell him very frankly that I am not in favor of negro citizenship. [Renewed applause.]' While the Dred Scott decision held that a State could not make a negro a citizen — although Lincoln thought it could — still, even 'if the State of Illinois had that power, I should be opposed to the exercise of it. [Cries of "Good, good," and applause.] That is all I have to say about it.'[4]

But as to slavery, there had been no peace and would not be, while 'it is kept in the position it now occupies.' Of course if we would let Douglas and his friends go on 'until they plant the institution all over the nation' there would be peace — but how would Douglas get the people to do that?

Douglas complained that Trumbull and Lincoln brought charges against him two years old, yet Douglas brought against him the Mexican War charge, which was ten years old, said Lincoln. Well, he would settle that! Dragging forward Ficklin who had been in Congress with him, Lincoln asked him to tell the crowd that '*he personally knows it to be a lie*.' He had voted against Democratic attempts to 'endorse the origin and justice of the war,' Lincoln admitted; but for supplies and by 'way of compensation or otherwise, for the benefit of soldiers, *I gave all*

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 299–300. [2] *Ib.*, 300–1. [3] *Ib.*, 302. [4] *Ib.*, 303.

the votes that Ficklin or Douglas did, and perhaps more. [Loud applause.]'

Avowing equal friendship for Lincoln and Douglas, Ficklin said only that Lincoln had voted for the Ashmun resolution that 'the Mexican War was unnecessary and unconstitutionally commenced.' True, said Lincoln; but that resolution was about 'the manner in which the war was *begun*.' The charge against him was that he had voted against supplies. When that charge was first made, Douglas's organ at Springfield had said that 'the charge really applies to John Henry [Lincoln's Whig predecessor in Congress], and I do know that John Henry *is now making speeches and fiercely battling for Judge Douglas.* [Loud applause.]' [1]

Lincoln gave the remainder of his time to a justification of Trumbull's charges against Douglas about the Toombs bill of 1856; in this part of his speech the words 'forgery,' 'forger,' 'liar,' 'stolen goods,' 'accused thief' were freely made use of, to the intense delight of the Republicans who sent up roars of laughter and gave cheer upon cheer.[2]

'THE GREAT TRIUMPH OF THE CAMPAIGN!' 'GREAT ROUT OF THE DOUGLASITES!' 'LINCOLN STRIPS THE GIANT DRY!' 'ABRAHAM TOSSED AGAIN!' 'LINCOLN . . . RUBS AT THE SPOT!' Headlines like these, above long descriptions even stronger, were the manner in which the partisan press told its readers of the outcome of the debate.

In spite of heavy rains the day before and 'a fiercely blowing, cutting wind' on the day of the debate at Galesburg on October 7, the biggest crowd of the campaign gathered at the charming college town. There were reception speeches, presentations of banners to each combatant by the students; and the rival partisans exhausted their ingenuity upon campaign mottoes, inscriptions, and devices.

Here for the first time we get a description of a campaign legend which played great and effective part in this contest, and is to have stronger influence in electing Lincoln to the Presidency and, indeed, in getting soldiers to enlist when he called for them. During the Lecompton debate in the Senate, Hammond of South

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 307. Italics Lincoln's. [2] *Ib.*, 307–11.

Carolina, in speaking of the economic basis of slavery, had made use of a phrase which the Republicans promptly seized upon, repeated, and made a Northern battle cry.

On one of his plantations Hammond had just been building a structure on soggy ground, which had to be erected on sills sunk in the mud. So he gave that as an illustration of slavery: the rough work had to be done by strong, unskilled labor, directed by superior intelligence; and the South had this at hand. It was the same with all such necessary toil, he said — workers of that kind were the 'mud-sills of society.' It was so in the North under the 'hireling system,' he said, as well as at the South under the slavery system.

The Republican press, politicians and speakers promptly took up these picturesque words, and told Northern workingmen, farmers, and laborers of all kinds, that the South had branded them as 'mud-sills.' The effect was immense. So among the banners at Galesburg, was one upon which this sentence flamed:

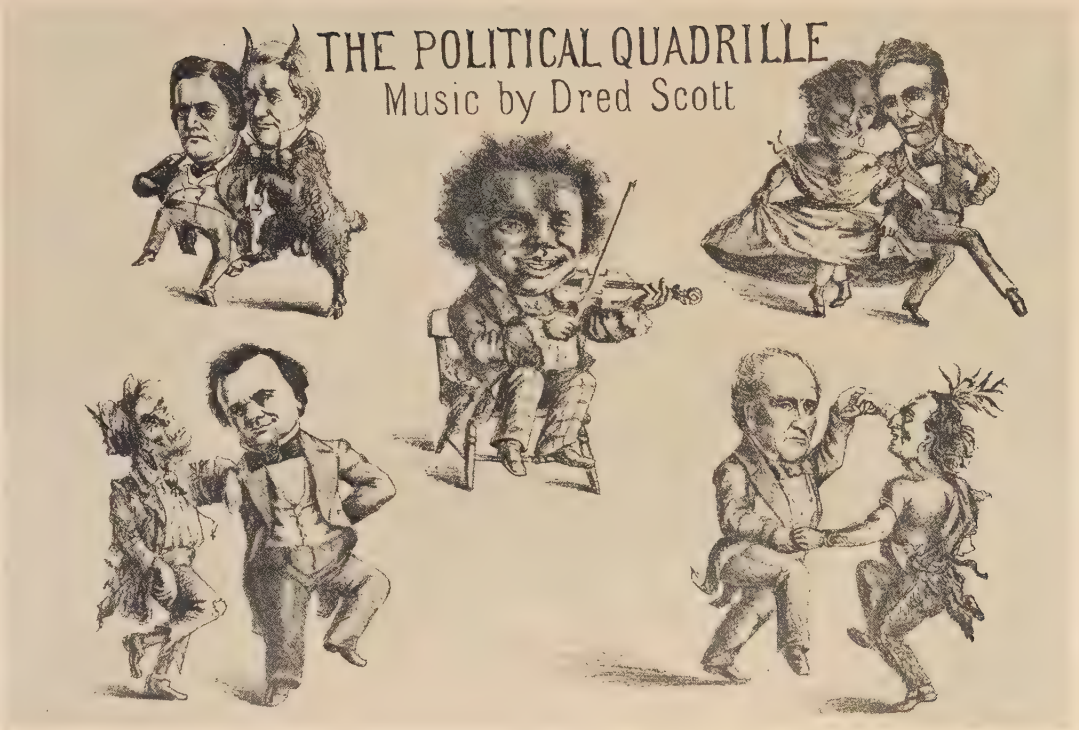
'SMALL-FISTED FARMERS, MUD-SILLS OF SOCIETY, GREASY MECHANICS, FOR A. LINCOLN.' [1]

The contestants were now in territory that was overwhelmingly Republican, in the radical sense of that term, and both men recognized that fact in what they said.

Lincoln made two new points. It was no test of the truth of a doctrine that it could not be proclaimed everywhere — Douglas could not preach his democracy in Russia, for instance — so what became of the cry that the Republican Party was sectional? Republicans could not advocate their principles in the South because the people there would not let them. According to his rule, Douglas himself was becoming sectional '[Great cheers and laughter],' for 'his speeches would not go as current now south of the Ohio as they have formerly gone there. [Loud cheers.]' [2]

The other point was that slavery was a 'wrong,' whereas Douglas 'discards the idea that there is anything wrong in slavery.' To him there was no difference between 'slavery and liberty.' If Douglas thought there was, he could not assert, as he had

[1] *Galesburg Democrat*, Oct. 9, 1858, as quoted in *Debates:* Sparks, 375. [2] *Ib.*, 349–50.



A CARTOON OF 1860

Breckinridge and 'Old Buck' (Buchanan)
Douglas and Squatter Sovereignty

Lincoln and Negro Equality
Bell and the Native Americans

done, that 'he don't care whether slavery is voted up or down.' [1]

Lincoln believed slavery to be 'a moral, social, and political evil,' he said, and having due regard to Constitutional guarantees, he wanted 'a policy that looks to the prevention of it as a wrong, and looks hopefully to the time when as a wrong it may come to an end. [Great applause.]' That was the 'real difference between Judge Douglas and his friends on the one hand, and the Republicans on the other.' [2]

In Lincoln's opinion — the opinion of 'one very humble man' — the Dred Scott decision never would have been rendered 'if the party that made it had not been sustained previously by the elections;' and the new Dred Scott decision that a State could not exclude slavery, never would be made 'if that party is not sustained by the elections. [Cries of "Yes," "yes."] I believe, further, that it is just as sure to be made as tomorrow is to come, if that party shall be sustained. ["We won't sustain it;" "Never;" "Never."]' Moreover, the argument which Douglas was making 'is preparing the public mind for that new Dred Scott decision.' For his support of the first Dred Scott decision 'commits him to the next decision . . . without enquiring whether it is right or wrong.'

In short, Douglas was 'preparing (whether purposely or not) the way for making the institution of slavery national! [Cries of "Yes, yes;" "That's so."] . . . I do not charge that he means it so; . . . but could you find an instrument so capable of doing it as Judge Douglas, or one employed in so apt a way to do it? [Great cheering. Cries of "Hit him again;" "That's the doctrine."]' [3]

If Douglas's policy should win, not only would slavery be spread over the whole Nation, but 'the next thing will be a grab for the territory of poor Mexico, an invasion of the rich lands of South America, then the adjoining islands will follow, each one of which promises additional slave-fields.' Remember, too, that the power to acquire new territory was vested in the President and Senate.[4]

[1] Notes taken by Horace White of Lincoln's speech at Edwardsville, Sept. 13, show that he used this argument and words on that occasion.

[2] *Debates*: Sparks, 352–3. [3] *Ib.*, 359–61. [4] *Ib.*,.362–3.

When Lincoln closed 'three tremendous cheers for Lincoln from the whole vast audience were given with great enthusiasm.'[1]

Lincoln had complained that Douglas made the same speech everywhere, began the Little Giant in reply. 'I wish I could only say the same of his speech. ["Good; you have him," and applause.] . . . He makes one speech north, and another south. ["That's so."] . . . All I asked of him was that he should deliver the speech that he has made here to-day in Coles County [Charleston] instead of in old Knox [Galesburg]. It would have settled the question between us in that doubtful county. . . .

'He tells you to-day that the negro was included in the Declaration of Independence when it is asserted that all men were created equal. ["We believe it."] Very well. [Here an uproar arose; persons in various parts of the crowd indulging in cat calls, groans, cheers, and other noises, preventing the speaker from proceeding.]'[2]

No one interrupted Lincoln, said Douglas, and he insisted on the same treatment. Lincoln also appealed for 'silence.'[3]

If, as Lincoln had said to-day and in Chicago, the equality phrase in the Declaration included negroes '["Ain't that so?"] . . . how came he to say at Charleston to the Kentuckians residing in that section of our State that the negro was physically inferior to the white man, belonged to an inferior race, and he [Lincoln] was for keeping him always in that inferior condition? ["Good."]' Yet here in Galesburg, Lincoln makes it a moral question. ['"He's right."] Is he right now, or was he right in Charleston?' shot back Douglas.[4]

How absurd for Lincoln to say that Douglas could not preach democracy in Russia, and give that as an answer to the Douglas principle that a man should hold the same doctrines throughout the length and breadth of this Republic! 'I would remind him that Russia is not under the American Constitution. ["Good," and laughter.]' If it were, 'I would maintain the same doctrine in Russia that I do in Illinois. [Cheers.]'

But the South was governed by the same Constitution as the North, and 'whenever a man advocates one set of principles in one section, and another set in another section, his opinions are

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 365. [2] *Ib.* [3] *Ib.*, 365–6. [4] *Ib.*, 366.

in violation of the Constitution which he has sworn to support. ["That's so."]' When Lincoln in Congress took an oath 'that he would be faithful to the Constitution, what did he mean — the Constitution as he expounds it in Galesburg, or the Constitution as he expounds it in Charleston? [Cheers.]' [1]

Lincoln 'knew better' when he asserted that Douglas would 'sanction the doctrine that would allow slaves to be brought here and held as slaves contrary to our [State] Constitution and laws; . . . that there is not a member of the Supreme Court that holds that doctrine; . . . that every one of them, as shown by their opinions, holds the reverse. Why this attempt, then, to bring the Supreme Court into disrepute among the people?'

If Lincoln should succeed in that, 'he will have changed the Government from one of laws into that of a mob. . . . I stand by the laws of the land ["That's it; hurrah for Douglas."] I stand by the Constitution as our fathers made it, by the laws as they are enacted, and by the decisions of the courts, upon all points within their jurisdiction as they are pronounced by the highest tribunal on earth, and any man who resists these must resort to mob law and violence to overturn the government of laws.' The reporter makes note that when Douglas closed 'the applause was perfectly furious and overwhelming.' [2]

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 366–7.

[2] *Ib.*, 370–2. [In the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, Oct. 13, 1858, appeared a letter, dated Oct. 7, from a correspondent in Galesburg, Ill. A part of the communication was reprinted in its issue of May 19, 1860, after Lincoln's nomination at Chicago, with the statement that it was written by the President of a College in Illinois, 'a gentleman well known in New England, and particularly esteemed in Boston.' This description indicates Edward Beecher, who was at the time of the debates in charge of a church in Galesburg and had been from 1844 to 1855 pastor of a church in Boston. After an account of the greeting given to each speaker, the writer continued:

'The men are entirely dissimilar. Mr. Douglas is a thick-set, finely-built courageous man, and has an air of self-confidence that does not a little inspire his supporters with hope. Mr. Lincoln is a tall, lank man, awkward, apparently diffident, and when not speaking has neither firmness in his countenance nor fire in his eye. . . .

'Though not a pleasant speaker, his [Douglas's] sentences are all compact and strong, his points are all clear, and every word he utters bears upon the doctrine he wishes to establish. He has no flights of fancy, no splendid passages, no prophetic appeals, no playful turns; he deals only in argument, and addresses only the intellect.

'Mr. Lincoln has a rich, silvery voice, enunciates with great distinctness, and has a fine command of language. He commenced by a review of the points Mr. Douglas had made. In this he showed great tact, and his retorts, though gentlemanly, were sharp, and reached to the core of the subject in dispute. . . . For about forty minutes, he spoke

The partisan press made the same old extravagant boasts for their respective champions, as before. On October 13 came the debate at Quincy, where old line Whigs were in numbers. Lincoln read from his speech of 1854 the same passages he had read at Ottawa, to show that his views on negro equality were the same as those stated at Charleston. There had been no double dealing, he said — 'at least, I deny it so far as the intention is concerned.' [1]

Lincoln asked Douglas to point out in the Dred Scott decision, where any one of the majority Justices of the Supreme Court had said that the *States* had a right to exclude slavery. If McLean and Curtis 'had asked to get an express declaration that the States could absolutely exclude slavery from their limits, what reason have we to believe that they would not have been voted down by the majority of the judges, just as Chase's amendment was voted down by Judge Douglas and his compeers when it was offered in the Nebraska bill. [Cheers.]' [2]

We must bear in mind that Lincoln was here making a stump speech to a popular audience in a furious political fight, and not a legal argument to a court. Indeed, we must remember that the Republican position then was that a judicial decision was as much a matter of party politics as a legislative vote. As has appeared, moreover, the heart of the Republican assault was that the Dred Scott decision was part of a great conspiracy to extend slavery, and that, when the time was ripe, another Dred Scott decision would be made as required by the plot.

For the second time in the debates, Lincoln declared that the basic issue was the wrong of slavery as against indifference to

with a power that we have seldom heard equalled. There was a grandeur in his thoughts, a comprehensiveness in his arguments, and a binding force in his conclusions, which were perfectly irresistible. The vast throng was silent as death; every eye was fixed upon the speaker, and all gave him serious attention. He was the tall man eloquent; his countenance glowed with animation, and his eye glistened with an intelligence that made it lustrous. He was no longer awkward and ungainly; but graceful, bold, commanding. Mr. Douglas had been quietly smoking up to this time; but here he forgot his cigar and listened with anxious attention. When he rose to reply, he appeared excited, disturbed, and his second effort seemed to us vastly inferior to his first. Mr. Lincoln had given him a great task, and Mr. Douglas had not time to answer him, even if he had the ability.' — W. C. F.]

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 397–400; White in Herndon and Weik, II, 123.

[2] *Debates:* Sparks, 400–1.

the moral phase of the subject. Even those Democrats who said it was wrong, objected to 'anybody else saying so.'

'You say it must not be opposed in the Free States, because slavery is not here; it must not be opposed in the Slave States, because it is there; it must not be opposed in politics, because that will make a fuss; it must not be opposed in the pulpit, because it is not religion. [Loud cheers.] Then where is the place to oppose it?' Yet it was 'overspreading the continent.' But it was a 'wrong' and must be treated so. '[Prolonged cheers.]' [1]

What question had Lincoln discussed upon which a Senator could act? asked Douglas, in reply.[2] As to the moral questions, let the people of each State decide for themselves. 'I hold that the people of the slave-holding States are civilized men as well as ourselves, that they bear consciences as well as we, and that they are accountable to God and their posterity, and not to us. It is for them to decide, therefore, the moral and religious right of the slavery question for themselves, within their own limits. . . . Let each State mind its own business and let its neighbors alone, and there will be no trouble on this question. . . .

'It does not become Mr. Lincoln, or anybody else, to tell the people of Kentucky that they have no consciences, that they are living in a state of iniquity, and that they are cherishing an institution to their bosoms in violation of the law of God. Better for him to adopt the doctrine of "Judge not, lest ye shall be judged." ["Good," and applause.]'

Thus, for the second time, did Douglas apply to Lincoln the scriptural quotation that Lincoln himself is to direct to the fire-eaters of his own party as the war drew to a close; and Douglas laid emphasis upon it: there were enough 'objects of charity in the Free States' to attend to 'without going abroad in search of negroes, of whose condition we know nothing.' [3]

In his rejoinder, Lincoln said that the trouble with Douglas was that he 'could not let it [slavery] stand upon the basis where our fathers placed it, but removed it, and *put it upon the cotton-gin basis.* [Roars of laughter and enthusiastic applause.] . . . Why could they not let it remain where the fathers of the

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 404–7. [2] *Ib.*, 417. [3] *Ib.*, 425–7.

Government originally placed it. [Cheers and cries of "Hurrah for Lincoln;" "Good;" "Good."]' [1]

Douglas would not say 'whether, if a decision [by the Supreme Court] is made, holding that the people of the States cannot exclude slavery he will support it or not. . . . The Judges of the Supreme Court as obstinately refused to say what they would do on this subject. . . . Now, Judge Douglas understands the Constitution according to the Dred Scott decision, and he is bound to support it as he understands it. [Cheers.] I understand it another way, and therefore I am bound to support it in the way I understand it. [Prolonged applause.]' [2]

Douglas had 'sang pæans' to his Popular Sovereignty until his Supreme Court had '*squatted* his Squatter Sovereignty out. [Uproarious laughter and applause.]. . . He has at last invented this sort of *do-nothing Sovereignty*, [Renewed laughter] — that the people may exclude slavery by a sort of "Sovereignty" that is exercised by doing nothing at all. [Continued laughter.] Is not that running his Popular Sovereignty down awfully? [Laughter.] Has it not got down as thin as the homeopathic soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death? [Roars of laughter and cheering.] . . .

'The Dred Scott decision covers the whole ground, and while it occupies it, there is no room even for the shadow of a starved pigeon to occupy the same ground. [Loud cheers and laughter. A voice on the platform — "Your time is almost out." Long cries of "Go on, go on; we'll listen all day."]' This was Lincoln's conclusion at Quincy of his Jonesboro point, that members of a Territorial Legislature were bound to protect slavery under the Dred Scott interpretation of the Constitution and that they could not, 'by withholding necessary laws, or by passing unfriendly laws, *nullify that Constitutional right*.' [3]

In closing, Lincoln denied that he had said that the 'Democratic' owners of Dred Scott got up the case. 'I never did say that. [Applause.]' He had only said the owners, without designating their politics, insisted Lincoln. 'I defy Judge Douglas to show that I ever said so, *for I never uttered* it. [One of Mr. Douglas's reporters gesticulated affirmatively at Mr. Lincoln.]

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 428. [2] *Ib.*, 430. [3] *Ib.*, 431–2.

I don't care if your hireling does say I did, I tell you myself, that *I never said the "Democratic" owners of Dred Scott got up the case.* [Tremendous enthusiasm.] I have never pretended to know whether Dred Scott's owners were Democrats, or Abolitionists, or Free-Soilers or Border Ruffians. I have said that there is evidence about the case tending to show that it was a made up case, for the purpose of getting that decision. I have said that that evidence was very strong in the fact that when Dred Scott was declared to be a slave, the owner of him made him free, showing that he had had the case tried and the question settled for such use as could be made of that decision; he cared nothing about the property thus declared to be his by that decision. [Enthusiastic applause.] But my time is out and I can say no more.' [1]

Luckily, we have a fairly impartial account of the Quincy gathering. A brilliant young German, twenty-nine years of age, then living in Wisconsin, had been asked by the Republican Central Committee to make some speeches in that State. One of his assignments was at Quincy, on the night of the day when the debate took place. The young man's name was Carl Schurz. While a fiery antagonist of slavery, and no less of the South too, and, at that time, an uncompromising Republican, Schurz strove to keep his prejudices from influencing his statements of fact as to what he saw and heard.

This young German was to play a not unimportant part in Lincoln's life and in the history of the period. In the campaign to elect Lincoln to the Presidency, we shall hear Schurz make a speech in which war drums throb and bayonets gleam, challenge to the South blaring like a bugle sounding the charge. His intelligence was as keen as his emotion was intense, he was inordinately ambitious for distinction and advancement, and he was the sharpest observer of the time of American customs, and especially of the looks, manners, and methods of prominent men in politics, particularly of those who were speakers on the stump.

Schurz's description of Lincoln and Douglas in debate and of the picturesque features of an American campaign meeting at

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 435. Italics Lincoln's.

that day is so photographic, that it must be reproduced almost entire. It is the best account of the kind. Yet it is not wholly without bias, for Schurz was a devoted Lincoln man and violently hated Douglas whom he had seen before in Washington; and we must bear these facts in mind when reading what he says about the two men.

Schurz was on the train for Quincy when, at a station, Lincoln got aboard. 'Hello, Abe! How are you?' cried the other passengers, who crowded about the candidate. 'Good evening, Ben!' 'How are you, Joe?' 'Glad to see you, Dick!' responded Lincoln. Some one introduced the youthful German Republican stump speaker. Schurz was 'somewhat startled' by Lincoln's height, he records: 'There he stood, overtopping by several inches all those surrounding him. Although measuring something over six feet myself, I had, standing quite near to him, to throw my head backward in order to look into his eyes.' Lincoln's face was swarthy, features strong and deeply furrowed, eyes benignant and melancholy. His face was clean shaven 'and looked even more haggard and careworn than later when it was framed in whiskers.'

On his head Lincoln wore 'a somewhat battered "stove-pipe" hat. His neck emerged, long and sinewy, from a white collar turned down over a thin black necktie. His lank, ungainly body was clad in a rusty black dress-coat with sleeves that should have been longer; but his arms appeared so long that the sleeves of a "store" coat could hardly be expected to cover them all the way down to the wrists. His black trousers, too, permitted a very full view of his large feet. On his left arm he carried a gray woolen shawl, which evidently served him for an overcoat in chilly weather. His left hand held a cotton umbrella of the bulging kind, and also a black satchel that bore the marks of long and hard usage.

'His right hand he had kept free for handshaking, of which there was no end until everybody in the car seemed to be satisfied. I had seen, in Washington and in the West, several public men of rough appearance; but none whose look seemed quite so uncouth not to say grotesque, as Lincoln's.' [1]

[1] *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, II, 89–90.

Lincoln received Schurz 'with off-hand cordiality, like an old acquaintance' and, told what the young German was there for, sat down with him. In a 'somewhat high-pitched but pleasant voice,' he told the foreign-born Republican recruit about the debates and the points Lincoln meant to make at Quincy. What did Schurz think of them and other matters? asked Lincoln 'in a tone of perfect ingenuousness.' The young orator — a mere 'beginner in politics' — was inclined to be overcome by the honor of Lincoln's confidence; but Lincoln simply would not let Schurz 'regard him as a great man. He talked in so simple and familiar a strain, and his manner and homely phrase were so absolutely free from any semblance of self-consciousness or pretension to superiority, that I soon felt as if I had known him all my life and we had long been close friends.' So with quaint stories by Lincoln, each of which wittily settled a point, and which Lincoln, a merry twinkle in his eye, enjoyed like a child, always leading the laughter at his own jokes until all joined in, the train sped toward Quincy.[1]

The town was full of movement and sound that night, brass bands playing, Republicans and Democrats, 'not in all cases quite sober,' shouting for Lincoln or Douglas and keeping it up 'until the small hours.' Lincoln wanted to walk to Browning's where he stopped, but the committee had a carriage in waiting for him and he rode. Next day the familiar scenes were repeated, delegations with banners led by 'maidens in white with tri-colored scarfs, . . . whose beauty was duly admired by everyone, including themselves.' But Schurz thought that, 'on the whole, the Democratic displays were more elaborate and gorgeous than those of the Republicans, and it was said that Douglas had plenty of money to spend for such things.'

The Little Giant 'travelled in what was called in those days "great style," with a secretary and servants and a numerous escort of somewhat loud companions, . . . by special train with cars specially decorated for the occasion, all of which contrasted strongly with Lincoln's extremely modest simplicity.' The crowds cheered and shouted and jostled in good-natured fashion, and gibed and jeered one another with a laugh. Schurz was given

[1] *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, II, 91.

a seat on the platform and heard and saw what went on. In front, the thousands stood peaceably, 'chaffing one another now and then in a good-tempered way.' Schurz thought that Lincoln's refutation of Douglas's statements at previous meetings may have been required, but 'it did not strike me as anything extraordinary, either in substance or in form,' he relates.

'Neither had Mr. Lincoln any of those physical advantages which usually are thought to be very desirable, if not necessary, to the orator. His voice was not musical, rather high-keyed, and apt to turn into a shrill treble in moments of excitement; but it was not positively disagreeable. It had an exceedingly penetrating, far-reaching quality. The looks of the audience convinced me that every word he spoke was understood at the remotest edges of the vast assemblage. His gesture was awkward. He swung his long arms sometimes in a very ungraceful manner. Now and then he would, to give particular emphasis to a point, bend his knees and body with a sudden downward jerk, and then shoot up again with a vehemence that raised him to his tiptoes and made him look much taller than he really was — a manner of enlivening a speech which at that time was . . . not unusual in the West, but which he succeeded in avoiding at a later period.

'There was, however, in all he said, a tone of earnest truthfulness, of elevated, noble sentiment, and of kindly sympathy, which added greatly to the strength of his argument, and became, as in the course of his speech he touched upon the moral side of the question in debate, powerfully impressive. Even when attacking his opponent with keen satire or invective, which, coming from any other speaker, would have sounded bitter and cruel, there was still a certain something in his utterance making his hearers feel that those thrusts came from a reluctant heart, and that he would much rather have treated his foe as friend.'

Schurz wondered what Douglas would say, when his time came to make answer. What could he say? While Lincoln's speech was not 'an overwhelming argument,' it was so 'very clear, logical, persuasive, convincing even,' that the immigrant

student of American stump speaking did not see how Douglas could refute it, although he might, 'with his cunning sophistry,' neutralize its effect. So when Douglas rose to speak, Schurz was all ears and eyes. 'By the side of Lincoln's tall, lank, and ungainly form, Douglas stood almost like a dwarf, very short of stature, but square-shouldered and broad-chested, a massive head upon a strong neck, the very embodiment of force, combativeness, and staying power. . . . He looked rather natty and well groomed in excellently fitting broadcloth and shining linen. But his face seemed a little puffy, and it was said that he had been drinking hard with some boon companions either on his journey or after his arrival' — a charge which the Republicans made against Douglas everywhere and increasingly. 'The deep, horizontal wrinkle between his keen eyes was unusually dark and scowling. While he was listening to Lincoln's speech, a contemptuous smile now and then flitted across his lips, and when he rose, the tough parliamentary gladiator, he tossed his mane with an air of overbearing superiority, of threatening defiance, as if to say: "How dare anyone stand up against me?"

'As I looked at him, I detested him deeply; but my detestation was not free from an anxious dread as to what was to come. His voice, naturally a strong baritone, gave forth a hoarse and rough, at times even something like a barking, sound. His tone was, from the very start, angry, dictatorial, and insolent in the extreme. In one of his first sentences he charged Lincoln with "base insinuations," and then he went on in that style with a wrathful frown upon his brow, defiantly shaking his head, clenching his fists, and stamping his feet.

'No language seemed to be too offensive for him, and even inoffensive things he would sometimes bring out in a manner which sounded as if intended to be insulting; and thus he occasionally called forth, instead of applause from his friends, demonstrations of remonstrance from the opposition. But his sentences were well put together, his points strongly accentuated, his argumentation seemingly clear and plausible, . . . his appeals to prejudice unprincipled and reckless, but shrewdly aimed, and his invective vigorous and exceedingly trying to the temper of the assailed party. On the whole, his friends were

well pleased with his performance, and rewarded him with vociferous cheers.' [1]

But in his rejoinder, says Schurz, Lincoln 'replied to Douglas's arguments and attacks with rapid thrusts so deft and piercing, with humorous retort so quaint and pat, and with witty illustrations so clenching, and he did it so good-naturedly, that the meeting, again and again, broke out in bursts of delight by which even many of his opponents were carried away, while the scowl on Douglas's face grew darker and darker.' [2]

Two days later, on October 15, Lincoln and Douglas held their last debate at Alton, before a gathering almost as small as that at Jonesboro.[3] Here the Administration Democrats, who had been assailing Douglas even more fiercely than the Republicans had attacked him, invaded the meeting itself. Their candidate for Congress for that District, one Dr. Hope, found a place on the stand and, when Douglas rose to open the debate, asked him whether he believed that 'Territorial Legislatures ought to pass laws to protect slavery in the territories.'

'You will get an answer in the course of my remarks,' Douglas retorted, and the crowd applauded. Suppose Lincoln's idea that the Nation must be all slave or all free had ruled the makers of the Constitution: the country would have been made all slave permanently, for twelve of the States then had slavery and only one did not. Wiser than Lincoln, the founders of the Republic left that and all domestic questions to the States; and through the working of that principle, one State after another had abolished slavery until the free States were in the majority of both Houses of Congress — yes, and now had the power to elect a President 'without the aid of a Southern State.' Would the people of the North abandon that principle of local self-government now, just because they had the strength to do so, 'and wage war against the Southern States and their institutions un-

[1] Schurz, II, 94–5.

[2] *Ib.*, 95–6. Part of Schurz's account, first published in *McClure's Magazine*, is also in *Debates:* Sparks, 446–8.

[3] White, in Herndon and Weik, II, 124. Mrs. Lincoln came from Springfield and she and Lincoln were at the Franklin House. Douglas stopped at the Alton House, where his room was crowded by visitors all the time.

til you force them to abolish slavery everywhere? ["No, never;" and great applause.]' [1]

The Administration candidate for Congress would better not have aroused Douglas, for the Little Giant struck back without mercy. All that he had said against the Administration forces, he now repeated in words and tone of fury. They were helping the Republicans everywhere in the State against the Democratic Party, cried Douglas; the President had ordered him how to vote and threatened to remove his friends from office if he did not obey. Douglas had replied to Buchanan: 'You did not elect me. I represent Illinois, and I am accountable to Illinois, as my constituency, and to God; but not to the President or any other power on earth. ["Good, good," and vociferous applause.]'

The Administration men were now waging war on Douglas, he said, because he would not obey executive orders as to how he should vote in the Senate. '["Never do it;" "three cheers," etc.]' Dictation by a President to the Senate was 'subversive of the principles of our Constitution.' Permit such a course of action by a President and 'you convert this Government from a republic to a despotism. ["Hear, Hear," and cheers.]' [2]

National men must rally to the defence of national principles; for sectionalists were uniting on the one question of slavery, and their 'treasonable designs' must be thwarted. In former times, Whigs and Democrats fought one another at the polls about banks, tariff, and the like, but 'all united as a band of brothers when the peace, harmony, or integrity of the Union was imperilled. [Tremendous applause.]' That was what patriotism and good sense required now.

Douglas read from Buchanan's letter accepting the Presidential nomination, that 'the people of a Territory, like those of a State, shall decide for themselves whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits' — a principle 'as ancient as free government itself.' There, said Douglas, Dr. Hope would find the answer to his question.

Let each Territory and State mind its own business and there would be no trouble. Why permit a sectional party to rend the Nation 'merely that a few ambitious men may ride into power

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 454–5. [2] *Ib.*, 460–1.

on a sectional hobby?' Not one of them dreamed of a sectional party while the South was the stronger section; only when the North grew strong enough to elect a sectional President, did 'ambitious Northern men' try to excite the sections against each other and to induce American citizens to vote according to geographical lines.[1]

Amid cheers, cries of approval, 'uproarious laughter' and like demonstrations, Lincoln told of his pleasure at Douglas's attack on the Administration: 'Go it, husband! — Go it bear! [Great laughter.]' But why should Douglas complain that the President was inconsistent? Had not Buchanan 'as much right to be inconsistent as Douglas has? [Loud applause and laughter; "Good!" "Good;" "Hurrah for Lincoln."] Has Douglas the *exclusive right*, in this country, of being *on all sides of all questions?* . . . [Great laughter.]' [2]

By some accident, he had omitted heretofore to correct Douglas's statement that he complained of the Dred Scott decision for having held that a negro could not be a citizen of the United States. 'In point of fact it is *untrue*,' cried Lincoln. 'I never have complained *especially* of the Dred Scott decision because it held that a negro could not be a citizen.' His objection was, said Lincoln, that the Dred Scott decision was a 'portion of a system or scheme to make slavery national in this country' — that was what he had tried to prove in his house-divided speech.

'I mentioned as a fact,' that the Supreme Court had held that a negro could not be a citizen, for the purpose, 'as I supposed,' of preventing a negro from ever, under any circumstances, claiming the rights of citizenship under the Constitution. 'I stated that, without making any complaint of it at all;' and then went on to marshal the evidence 'tending to prove a combination and conspiracy to make the institution of slavery national' — that was all.[3]

Lincoln went on at great length, to show that his views of the negro had not changed, reading from his speeches and those of Clay. Three years ago no human being ever imagined that the Declaration of Independence did not include the negro — of

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 465–6.
[2] *Ib.*, 466–7. Italics Lincoln's.
[3] *Ib.*, 467–8.

course, Calhoun and others had '*denied the truth of it*,' but not the fact itself. Douglas and Taney had invented the new doctrine, and '*I combat it* as having an evil tendency, if not an evil design. I combat it as having a tendency to dehumanize the negro, to take away from him the right of ever striving to be a man. I combat it as being one of the thousand things constantly done in these days to prepare the public mind to make property, and nothing but property, of the *negro in all the States of this Union*. [Tremendous applause. "Hurrah for Lincoln. Hurrah for Trumbull."]' [1]

Ignoring the Abolition assault, Lincoln repeated in many forms the Republican assertion that there had been peace on the slavery question until the effort to extend slavery had begun. The great danger was that that effort would succeed; and, regardless of the moral wrong of slavery, he was against the spread of it, said Lincoln, because he wanted to keep the Territories for white men, 'where they can settle upon new soil and better their condition in life. [Great and continued cheering.]

'I am in favor of this, not merely (I must say it here as I have elsewhere) for our own people who are born amongst us, but as an outlet for *free white people everywhere*, the world over — in which Hans, and Baptiste, and Patrick, and all other men from all the world, may find new homes and better their condition in life. [Loud and long continued applause.]' This was, by far, the most effective appeal that Republican speakers made to voters. But 'the real issue' was the 'wrong' of slavery,[2] said Lincoln; Douglas and his friends did not think it a wrong nor look to an end of it.

So Lincoln was in favor of the war by the Administration against Douglas! was he, exclaimed Douglas when beginning his rejoinder. It was refreshing to learn that 'Mr. Lincoln is in favor of prosecuting one war vigorously. [Roars of laughter.] It is the first war I ever knew him to be in favor of prosecuting. [Renewed laughter.] It is the first war that I ever knew him to believe to be just or constitutional. [Laughter and cheers.]' All Federal officeholders were Lincoln's allies '["That's so."]' and

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 468–73. Italics Lincoln's. [2] *Ib.*, 480–5.

as such were running separate tickets so as to divide the Democratic Party, 'although the leaders all intend to vote directly the Abolition [Republican] ticket and only leave the greenhorns to vote this separate ticket who refuse to go into the Abolition [Republican] camp. [Laughter and cheers.]' [1]

At length and with effect Douglas went into a detailed account of how Lincoln had been against Clay and helped to defeat his nomination when he could have been elected. Then, too, it was Lincoln, Seward, and that coterie who 'got up that strife that I helped Clay to put down. [Tremendous applause.]' [2]

Was it true, asked Douglas, that slavery was the only thing that ever threatened the Union, as Lincoln kept saying all the time? What ignorance of American history! 'Did not Nullification once raise its head and disturb the peace of this Union in 1832? Was that the slavery question, Mr. Lincoln? Did not disunion raise its monster head during the last war with Great Britain? Was that the slavery question, Mr. Lincoln? The peace of this country has been three times disturbed, and the Union endangered, once during the war with Great Britain, once on the tariff question, and once on the slavery question. [Three cheers for Douglas.]'

The only use made of the slavery question was to arouse sectional strife. Let each State and Territory do as it pleased — attend to its own business — and the slavery question would settle itself. 'I care more for the great principle of self-government, . . . than I do for all the negroes in Christendom. [Cheers.] I would not endanger the perpetuity of this Union, I would not blot out the great inalienable rights of the white men, for all the negroes that ever existed. [Renewed applause.]' [3] Douglas closed with an appeal to 'stand by the Constitution as our fathers made it, obey the laws, . . . sustain the decisions of the Supreme Court and the constituted authorities.' [4]

The reporter of the debate states that for some minutes after Douglas had concluded the applause was 'perfectly deafening and overwhelming. He seemed to have carried his vast auditory entirely with him in sympathy and feeling, for their enthusiasm was boundless.' [5]

[1] *Debates:* Sparks, 488–9. [2] *Ib.*, 490–3. [3] *Ib.*, 492–3. [4] *Ib.*, 496. [5] *Ib.*

1858–1861

At this point the pen of the writer stopped, leaving the chapter in its first draft. At Mr. Beveridge's elbow were the volumes of the *Debates* and Schurz's *Autobiography*, open at the pages whence he had taken the last quotations or references. On the table, near his hand, were the heaps of notes prepared for the chapter, extracts from letters, newspapers, proceedings of conventions and legislatures, and photostats of the more important manuscripts he had found in public and private collections. From this mass he would have drawn the facts and phrases which would have given life to the summary of the debates, shown the personal and political influences at work throughout the land, and drawn a full picture of a battle that was, unfelt by the participants, big with fate of the Nation.

What was then passing in Illinois could not be understood for two years to come. An essential factor in political history and a turning point in Lincoln's life, the events of 1859 and 1860 must be measured in the result. Mr. Beveridge planned to close this portion of the Life of Lincoln with his inauguration, on March 4, 1861. All that had passed before the year of the debates had been but a preparation for what was to follow. The slow, uncertain, yet consistent, development of Lincoln's political faith and opportunity, described in such detail in these volumes, and as yet unknown outside of his own State and its immediate neighbors, left him at the end of the debates in a position of doubt. Were he to win the senatorship, he would be acclaimed, recognized for a notable victory, and possibly as one more candidate for the presidency. Were he defeated, the palm of victory would be with Douglas. For Lincoln the turn of a card was important; his whole future depended upon the outcome of the game he had entered. An outline of the events of the two years 1859–60 is called for, to indicate the succession of events and its influence upon his political fortunes.

On November 2, 1858, a cold and wet day, the election was held in Illinois. The Republicans elected the State officers, for the first time making Illinois a Republican State; but the Democrats still held a majority in both branches of the Legislature, and that, barring accidents, assured the reëlection of Douglas to the Senate. The strength of the Buchanan Democrats had proved negligible and the Douglas Democrats had polled a vote so much over that of 1856 that it could not be accounted for by growth of population. Lincoln claimed that the apportionment law gave his opponent a decided advantage. For Douglas it was a great personal triumph, no matter how explained. The event followed necessarily. On a joint ballot of the Legislature, January 6, 1859, by a strict party division, Douglas received fifty-four

and Lincoln forty-one votes. A telegram to Douglas from Lanphier gave the glory to God and the 'Sucker Democracy' for the victory; Douglas accepted it as the voice of the people.

Two days after the election, Lincoln wrote to Crittenden: 'The emotions of defeat at the close of a struggle in which I felt more than a merely selfish interest, and to which defeat the use of your name contributed largely, are fresh upon me;' but he made no complaint on the part Crittenden had played.[1] Before two weeks had passed he could treat the matter in joking vein with Judd. 'I have the pleasure to inform you that I am convalescent, and hoping these lines may find you in the same improving state of health. Doubtless you have suspected for some time that I entertain a personal wish for a term in the United States Senate; and had the suspicion taken the shape of a direct charge, I think I could not have truthfully denied it. But let the past as nothing be.' In serious mood he continued: 'The fight must go on. . . . I shall fight in the ranks, but I shall be in no one's way for any of the places.' The Republican votes are worth keeping together, the apportionment law must be altered and Trumbull's reëlection in 1860 must as far as possible be assured.[2] 'The fight must go on,' he wrote to another. 'The question is not half settled. New splits and divisions will soon be upon our adversaries, and we shall fuse again.'[3] The Democratic strength is waning. 'There will be another "blow up" in the Democracy. Douglas managed to be supported both as the best instrument to *break down*, and to *up-hold* the slave power. No ingenuity can keep this deception — this double position — up a great while.'[4]

The campaign had cost Lincoln heavily and he admitted to Judd at this time that he was 'absolutely without money now for even household purposes.' Yet, as he had had the post of honor in the contest, it was not for him to be 'over-nice' and he pledged himself for a contribution to meet the expenses of the Republican Committee.[5] Wearily he turned to seeking cases and fees, but not for a moment did he drop political affairs. The future action of the party absorbed him and he early took the ground that with no yielding of principle, in the long run the Republicans were certain to win. There must be no fusion and no compromises. Left to themselves the Democrats were driving to disaster and Douglas was the probable victim. With clear insight Lincoln saw that the 'majority of the democratic politicians of the nation meant to kill' Douglas, and their best method was to 'present him

[1] Lincoln to Crittenden, Nov. 4, 1858. *Works*, v, 90–1.

[2] Lincoln to Judd, Nov. 15, 1858. *Ib.*, 91–2.

[3] Lincoln to E. A. Paine, Nov. 19, 1858. Tracy, 95–6.

[4] Lincoln to B. C. Lundy, Nov. 26, 1858. *Ib.*, 96. And to Henry Asbury, Nov. 19, 1858. *Ib.*, 94.

[5] Lincoln to Judd, Nov. 16, 1858. *Ib.*, 93.

with no new test, let him into the Charleston Convention, and then outvote him, and nominate another.' Any other method would make Douglas the leader of the movement against the slave power, and break the Republican Party into fragments. 'The Republican principle can in no wise live with Douglas; and it is arrant folly now, as it was last spring, to waste time, and scatter labor already performed, in dallying with him.' [1] From that stand Lincoln never swerved and he encouraged his friends to maintain it unshaken.

Lincoln came out of the senatorial election with increased reputation. His party had received a majority of the popular vote [2] and the differences between the old line Whigs and the Republicans tended to grow less as his conservatism, his honesty and his gifts as an orator were admitted. Anti-Nebraska Democrats, like Trumbull, Judd, and Palmer, were intent upon making Lincoln Senator in the next election, and they had great influence, if not control, through the State administration. They recognized their debt to Lincoln incurred in the earlier contest of 1855, and were as ardent as the original Republicans in their support of him. The Democrats tended to maintain and widen their differences, while the Republicans were increasing in strength by a policy which brought to it a good part of the factions growing from the break-up of the Whig Party.

Lincoln's gain had been local and outside of Illinois interest had centered on Douglas; so much so, that neither encouragement nor assistance had been given to Lincoln. Urged by the Republican leaders and journals of the East to return Douglas to the Senate, the Republicans of Illinois resented the suggestion and argued that should that course be taken the party would be absorbed by Douglas and disappear not only in Illinois but throughout the land. Acting alone, they had polled a larger vote than the Democrats and intended to hold that vote for the next election, when they counted upon certain victory. Not one of the questions which divided North and South had been settled by the election of 1858, but the lines of division were more strictly drawn. Jefferson Davis, while the Lincoln-Douglas debates were in process, came to New England in search of health and presented the Southern position in modified yet unmistakable terms. The Territories should be open to all for settlement; the National Government had no constitutional power either to establish or to prohibit slavery anywhere; the individual should be protected in his constitutional rights, and the community should be allowed to determine all domestic questions as in its wisdom should seem best; Congress had

[1] Lincoln to Trumbull, Dec. 11, 1858. Tracy, 96–8.

[2] Republican vote for governor, 125,430; Democratic (Douglas) 121,609, National Democrats, 5,071. The Republican candidates for the Legislature were defeated in Sangamon, Morgan, Madison, Logan and Mason counties — those near Springfield and most closely connected with Lincoln.

no more power to pass on the manner of forming a constitution than it had right to dictate the instrument itself; the right of a State to enter the Union was a thing apart from the admission or exclusion of slave property. 'If the right existed to form a constitution at all the power of Congress was limited to the simple question, is it republican?'

On October 11, two days after Lincoln and Douglas had met at Galesburg, Davis spoke in Boston at a Democratic ratification meeting, and laid down a doctrine which was to prove fatal to Douglas and his popular sovereignty. Davis asserted the want of power in Congress to declare what should be property, in a territory or elsewhere, and the absence of power in the people of a territory to deprive any citizen of the United States subsequently migrating thither of those rights which belonged to him as an equal owner of the soil. Until the territory became a State the constitution and laws of the United States prevailed. 'The constitution recognizes all property; gives equal privileges to every citizen of the States; and it would be a violation of its fundamental principles to attempt any discrimination.' Four days after this speech was made Douglas at Alton claimed Davis as a supporter of his popular sovereignty,[1] but the two men were far apart on the real question involved. Agreeing that Congress had no power to establish or prohibit slavery anywhere — the doctrine of nonintervention — Davis asserted that only when a territory formed a State government could its people rule upon the right of a person to bring property into it, and 'no power upon earth has the right to decide it before that time.' Although six weeks had passed since Douglas had committed himself to the 'Freeport Doctrine,' it cannot be assumed that Davis had that particular statement in mind; but on November 16 Davis spoke before the Mississippi legislature and in straight terms opposed Douglas's doctrine and the application Douglas had made of his Portland address. 'The difference between us is as wide as that of one who would assert the right to rob from him who admitted the power.' In his tour of the South Douglas found the issue raised against him. By his question to Douglas at Freeport, Lincoln had given his rival into the hands of Davis and his followers.

The most prominent man in public life and the ablest man in his party, Douglas found himself in a position where his influence was certain to decrease. The senatorial election in Illinois left him entirely without Republican favor, putting an end to the plan of eastern Republicans of forming an alliance with him. It had also alienated a large part of the Democratic Party and made him as sectional as any Republican. He was as Northern as any Black Republican. The South more and more questioned his doctrine of popular sovereignty

[1] He used a few sentences from Davis's Portland speech of Aug. 24, 1858.

and his soundness on Democratic policy and the demands of the South. The bitterness of the Buchanan Administration against him was intensified and Cobb told Stephens that only over his dead body could Douglas ever be restored to the confidence of the Democracy of Georgia. Passing through the South, crossing to Cuba, Douglas entered at the port of New York and received ovations there and in Philadelphia which proved no indications of solid popularity. On arriving in Washington he found that his colleagues in the Senate had put him second on the Committee on Territories, as chairman of which he had won his greatest and most striking victories. In spite of these hostile influences he was the admitted leader of the Democrats and in forecasting the presidential canvass of 1860 the contest lay in the North between Douglas and Seward or some conservative Republican, and in the South, between Douglas and an increasingly hostile Democracy, ready to combine upon any candidate who could defeat him.

In the Nation Seward led the Republican Party through his long public service, his recognized abilities in debate and in party direction, and his control in New York politics. However radical had been some of his public utterances in the past, he had never been indifferent to actual conditions and what was possible in the practical way under them. In the last week of the campaign and ten days after the final debate between Douglas and Lincoln in Illinois, Seward made at Rochester a speech in which he clearly stated the controversy between North and South. 'It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation or entirely a free-labor nation.' [1] He had often expressed the same idea without receiving the notice now given by friend and opponent. Seeming to echo the house-divided utterance of Lincoln, Seward's words took on a national importance. Parker applauded: 'He quite outruns his party, and no Republican paper in New England, I fear, has dared to republish them.' The *Springfield Republican* thought the speech impolitic, and liable to injure Seward and the party. Even the New York *Times*, favorable to Seward, criticized his doctrine. Herndon too questioned their prudence, wisdom, or sagacity; 'the people are still tender footed as a whole.' Lincoln later said that he agreed with Seward's 'irrepressible conflict,' but not with his 'higher law' doctrine, an exhibition of his caution in expressing his opinions.

Mention of Lincoln for President naturally followed the Republican victory in Illinois. On November 19, 1858, the *Olney Times* came out for him and a month later the *Chicago Press and Tribune* noted that the same suggestion had been made 'in various parts of the country,'

[1] Seward at Rochester, Oct. 25, 1858. *Works*, IV, 292.

and believed that an unbroken front on the part of Lincoln's friends at the proper time would make him the candidate in 1860.[1] His friend Pickett of the *Tazewell County Mirror* wrote to Lincoln on the question in April, 1859, and in reply was assured that Lincoln did not consider himself fit for the office, a position he maintained consistently through the year.[2] He sought to exclude from discussion whatever could divide the Republican vote — a naturalization rule such as Massachusetts had adopted; Ohio's demand for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave law; and a leaning towards popular sovereignty; any one of which would reduce the Republican vote in Illinois, and prove a firebrand in a national convention. The party had one great object — to prevent the spread and nationalization of slavery, and that was a national question and must be attended to by the Nation.[3] Regarding Douglas as 'the most dangerous enemy of liberty, because the most insidious,' he would favor fusion in 1860 with other factions anywhere, but only on republican grounds.[4]

In the autumn of 1859 Lincoln and Douglas took part in the campaign in Ohio and thus carried on their debates of the previous year. The lines of difference were even more clearly defined. Douglas again urged his doctrine that local legislation would determine the existence of slavery in the Territories and welcomed the passage by New Mexico of a law protecting slaves, though no slaves were in the Territory. He again asserted his indifference whether slavery was voted up or voted down. In his speeches Lincoln made it plain that the chief danger to be met was in the 'Douglas popular sovereignty.' He made much of Douglas's admission at Freeport, that the people of a territory could lawfully exclude slavery from that territory, notwithstanding the Dred Scott decision. 'There was something about that answer that has probably been a trouble to the judge ever since.' It involved the absurdity that 'a thing may be lawfully driven away from where it has a lawful right to be.' Lincoln claimed that Douglas had not only never again stated since the Freeport speech that the people of the Territories could exclude slavery, but he had changed his ground and argued that under the Dred Scott decision, the Constitution did not

[1] *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Dec. 16, 1858.

[2] Lincoln to Pickett, April 16, 1859, and to Samuel Galloway, July 28, 1859. *Works*, v, 127, 136.

[3] Lincoln to Schuyler Colfax, July 6, 1859. *Ib.*, v, 131–3. The Ohio Republican State Convention adopted a plank calling for 'a repeal of the atrocious Fugitive Slave law.' Lincoln wrote to Chase, June 9, 1859: 'This is already damaging us here. I have no doubt that if that plank be even *introduced* into the next Republican National Convention, it will explode it. . . . I enter upon no argument one way or the other; but I assure you the cause of Republicanism is hopeless in Illinois, if it be in any way made responsible for that plank. I hope you can, and will, contribute something to relieve us from it.' MS.

[4] Lincoln to Canisius, May 17, 1859. *Ib.*, v, 129–30.

'carry slavery into the Territories beyond the power of the people of the Territories to control it as other property. He does not say the people can drive it out, but they can control it as other property.' [1] In denying that the negro had no share in the Declaration of Independence Douglas, said Lincoln, assigned to him the condition of a brute.[2]

That was not the Republican doctrine. What is wanted, Lincoln asserted, was a 'national policy which acknowledges and deals with slavery as a wrong.' [3] He clearly outlined the position of the Republicans: 'I say that we must not interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists, because the Constitution forbids it, and the general welfare does not require us to do so. We must not withhold an efficient fugitive slave law, because the Constitution requires us, as I understand it, not to withhold such a law. But we must prevent the outspreading of the institution, because neither the Constitution nor general welfare requires us to extend it. We must prevent the revival of the African slave-trade, and the enacting by Congress of a territorial slave-code. We must prevent each of these things being done by either congresses or courts. The people of these United States are the rightful masters of both congresses and courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution.' [4]

Ohio went Republican by thirteen thousand majority and the Republicans carried both Pennsylvania and Iowa. Almost before the victories could be measured by the November elections came the raid of John Brown on Harper's Ferry. It produced an undue apprehension in the South, not wholly unwelcome to those who saw political advantage in the excitement aroused. The South charged the North with participation in the raid, or, if not actually taking part, with a want of sympathy for the South. Douglas denounced the raid and laid it to the teachings of the Republicans.[5] Lincoln, coldly and without feeling for Brown, described it as an absurd act of an enthusiast; [6] and Seward, admitting the earnest though fatally erroneous convictions of Brown, placed in contrast the better means of reaching the proposed ends — an appeal to the reason and judgment of the people.[7] The session of Congress in the winter of 1859–60 was embittered by the Brown raid and by a long contest over the Speakership of the House in which Helper's *Impending Crisis*, a violent attack by a Southerner upon slavery and especially the slave-holders, played an important part. In both bodies of Congress threats of secession on the part of the South

[1] Speech at Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 16, 1859. *Works*, v, 173–5.
[2] At Cincinnati, Sept. 16, 1859. *Ib.*, 201–2. [3] *Ib.*, *Works*, v, 231.
[4] *Ib.*, 232. [5] *Cong. Globe*, 1st Sess. 36th Cong., 553–4.
[6] Cooper Union Speech, Feb. 27, 1860. [7] *Cong. Globe*, 1st Sess. 36th Cong.

were frequent and increasingly passionate. The election of a Black Republican president, said the leaders of the South, would end the Union, and of possible candidates Seward was the most hated and feared. Republican success in New York was believed to make the nomination of Seward certain in 1860, and to offer to the South a choice between submission to Sewardism or disunion. If Democrats, North and South, would act together he might be defeated; but a divided Democracy was an established fact. Howell Cobb thought Douglas out of the way, having lost his strength in both sections of the country; his proposal that a Southern man be nominated met with little response, though supported also by Toombs.[1]

Illinois Republicans had not yet accepted Lincoln beyond the status of a local offering. On September 28, 1859, Browning went to St. Louis to talk politics with Edward Bates and returned so much impressed by his ability as to look upon him as 'a most acceptable candidate for the Presidency, and I doubt not altogether the best man that the Republicans can support.' He arranged with Bates for a convention of all in Missouri opposed to the Administration, its nomination of Bates for President and the publication of his views on accepting. 'He is to maintain the absolute power of Congress over the Territories, inclusive of the question of slavery; to oppose the extension of slavery into free territory; to denounce the African slave trade, and to advocate the construction of the Pacific Railroad.' [2] In all his meetings with fellow Republicans Browning urged the availability of Bates. Even Judd, in October, would take him, 'if he shall appear to be the strongest man, and will put himself on Republican ground.' [3]

Lincoln was not inactive, but did not expect to be called by the party above the ranks, where he had 'enlisted for the permanent success of the Republican cause.' [4] His friends were urging his claims where they felt that influence could be carried. 'I would rather have a full term in the Senate than in the Presidency,' he wrote to Judd on December 9, 1859,[5] and while suggesting that the Republican National Convention should follow by a few days the Democratic Convention at Charleston, he did not attach much importance to having it in Illinois.[6] He was keen however in desiring to have all the support Illinois could give. On the evening of February 8, 1860, he talked with Browning, then at Springfield, and almost agreed that Bates might be the best man the Republicans could run; 'that he can get votes even in this county [Sangamon] that he [Lincoln] cannot get; and that there is a large class of voters in all the free States that would go for Bates,

[1] Cobb to Stephens, Nov. 14, 1859, and Toombs to Thomas, Dec. 4, 1859. *Am. Hist. Assn. Rept.*, 1911, II, 448, 450.

[2] Browning's *Diary*, I, 380. [3] *Ib.*, 382.

[4] Lincoln to W. E. Frazer, Nov. 1, 1859. *Works*, V, 257.

[5] *Ib.*, 282. [6] Lincoln to Judd, Dec. 14, 1859. *Ib.*, 283.

and for no other man.'[1] The next morning he wrote to Judd: 'I am not in a position where it would hurt much for me to not be nominated on the national ticket; but I am where it would hurt some for me to not get the Illinois delegates. . . . Can you not help me a little in this matter in your end of the Vineyard?' He ended with his usual hint: 'I mean this to be private.'[2]

Nor did Lincoln refuse invitations from other States. In the first week in December, 1859, he visited Kansas and spoke in five of the leading settlements, among which were Atchison and Leavenworth. Doubtless he had been influenced by Mark Delahay to accept the call, for Delahay hoped to be a United States Senator from Kansas, and had embarrassed Lincoln by asking for his aid.[3] He had received a more flattering request in October to deliver an address in Brooklyn, New York, in the church of Henry Ward Beecher. Accepting on condition that he might give a political paper, it led to a change in place and to his address in Cooper Institute, New York, on February 27, 1860, an occasion bringing him no little reputation in Republican circles in that city and throughout the East. The speech was not a mere repetition of what he had said in Illinois, Ohio, and Kansas, but gave a quite novel examination of how the 'fathers' had acted on the subject of slavery in the convention for framing the Constitution, in the Continental Congress on the government for the Northwest Territory, and in the early sessions of Congress under the Constitution. In no instance could he find any line dividing local from Federal authority, or anything properly forbidding the Federal Government 'to control as to slavery in Federal territory.' The argument turned upon Douglas's claim that 'Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now;' but Lincoln proved that the fathers were opposed to the Douglas doctrine.[4]

The speaker then turned to the Southern people and weighed their complaints against the North. He denied that the North was sectional, except so far as the South had made it so; that it was revolutionary, for the South sought something new, while the North maintained the old policy; that the North had made the slavery question more prominent than formerly, or that it could be held responsible for John Brown. The South threatened disunion, because it could not construe the Constitution as it wished on points in dispute with the North. Yet not only was the Dred Scot decision based on a mistaken statement of fact, but there had been a million and a half votes cast against slavery in the last election. Did the threat to destroy the Union, in

[1] Browning's *Diary*, I, 395.

[2] Lincoln to Judd, Feb. 9, 1860. *Works*, V, 290. See also his letter to Judd, Dec. 9, 1859. *Ib.*, 281.

[3] Lincoln to Delahay, Oct. 17, 1859. Tracy, 117.

[4] *Works*, V, 294–309.

the event of the election of a Republican president, differ from a highwayman's threat against the life of the man he meant to rob? What would satisfy the South? cried Lincoln. 'This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly — done in acts as well as in words. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-State constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.' On that depended the whole controversy, and no compromise was possible.[1]

Much as Douglas was criticized and feared in his own party in the South, he was the strongest candidate to be offered to the Charleston Convention. No other candidate could obtain votes in the North. Willingly through his friends he gave the pledge, not unusual in such circumstances, that he would support any nominee of the Convention on any platform he should be put;[2] but his nomination was not conceded, nor, if nominated, did the South believe he could be elected, nor, if defeated in the Convention, did he have sufficient strength to name a candidate favorable to his policy. He had never brooked a rival. Breckinridge, the Vice-President, seemed to have a large following and came from a Border State, but Douglas told Toombs that Breckinridge 'was his last choice.' Nor was he cordial towards Hunter of Virginia, another Democratic possibility.[3] Confident of his own power, he saw no good reason for using it to endorse one who might become a rival.

The fight in Illinois between Douglas and the Administration continued and each faction sought to outweigh the other in preparing for the struggle at Charleston. Douglas, the stronger and more aggressive, summoned the Democratic State Convention to meet January 2, and his views dominated the gathering. The platform adopted in the National Convention of 1856 at Cincinnati was reaffirmed and the introduction of new issues discouraged. Controverted questions were to be submitted to the Supreme Court and the support of the party was pledged to the candidate to be named at Charleston. Six days later the Administration Democrats came together, chose a full delegation to Charleston and in their resolutions opposed all that the Douglas wing had endorsed. Two sets of delegates would contend for recognition at Charleston, just as two delegations would also apply from New York — added causes of discord in a situation of immense difficulty.

[1] *Works*, v, 310–28. From New York Lincoln went to Connecticut, speaking at Hartford, New Haven and Norwich, and at each place he aroused curiosity as a Western orator, and gave satisfaction by his presentation of the question at issue. *Ib.*, 329–71: vi, 1–15. Connecticut was a Democratic State, yet might be turned.

[2] Toombs to Stephens, Dec. 26, 1859. *Am. Hist. Assn. Rept.*, 1911, ii, 452.

[3] *Ib.*, Jan. 11, 1860. *Ib.*, 455.

On February 2, 1860, Davis introduced in the Senate his resolutions intended to head off Douglas at Charleston. The fourth resolution was directed against Douglas's doctrine of unfriendly legislation. Adopted in caucus by all the Southern Senators and by all the Democratic Senators from the North, except Douglas and Pugh, they asserted a doctrine which required the sacrifice of that which Douglas had made the foundation of his policy. They left no ground for compromise and if adopted by the Convention would mean the death of the Democratic Party at the North. When the Charleston Convention met on April 23 the Davis resolutions had accomplished their purpose.

The Convention opened its proceedings with a large attendance and a feeling of great uncertainty. The sole question before it was how to dispose of Douglas; all else turned upon the decision of that problem. The Northern delegates supported Douglas and his insistence on the adoption of the Cincinnati platform of 1856, without change in its terms. The South was bent upon ending his leadership, denying that he represented the true Democratic Party. The Administration threw what little influence it had with the South. Should he be made the candidate, the Southern States would withdraw from the Convention. The Illinois and New York contests were decided in favor of Douglas and gave him a majority of votes in the Convention but not a majority of the States, and he was still far from having the two-thirds of the votes necessary to a choice. Led by Richardson, with Ficklin, Merrick, and Linder among the aids, the delegation from Illinois showed fine organization, courage, and resourcefulness, and from the first carried on an aggressive attack. The South, however, without a candidate or a policy other than sectional, fought as a unit. If it could not win, it could at least destroy the political prestige of Douglas, deprive him of all support from the slave States. The Convention at once developed irreconcilable contests — Douglas and anti-Douglas, popular sovereignty and the protection of slave property in the Territories.

The Committee on Resolutions reported two platforms. The one from the majority of the Committee satisfied the Southern claims but could win the support of only a minority of the Convention; the other, the platform desired by Douglas, gained the majority of the Convention but at the cost of disruption. On the seventh day the secession of the Southern delegations followed the adoption of the Douglas platform and before the nomination of candidates. The departure of a small number of hostile votes might have made it possible for Douglas to secure the required two-thirds of the Convention; but the South went out as a whole and no one could deny the fatal weakness of setting up a purely sectional candidate, opposed by the strongest elements of the party. To name Douglas for the Presidency would end all hope of

victory, destroy the party and would even lead to the end of the Union. Yet nominations were made. Fifty-seven ballots were taken, only to prove that Douglas, leading throughout, could not win. Admitting failure, the Convention adjourned on the tenth day, to meet at Baltimore on the eighteenth of June.

Whatever expectation had rested on possible changes in the delegations vanished when the Convention reassembled. Factional feeling had been increased in the interval by the debates in the Senate between Douglas and his opponents. The South sent representatives, but a number were of those who had bolted at Charleston, and it was believed that they now sought admission only to repeat the secession. Before the discussion on credentials had ended a rumor spread of a letter from Douglas to Dean Richmond, leader of the New York delegation, withdrawing his name. Richardson and the straight Douglas men denied the existence of such a letter, and because of his close relations with Douglas the word of Richardson was taken. Yet from the beginning Richardson had in his pocket a like letter which, he later said, he could not use because of the confusion in the Convention. On the evening of the fifth day, June 22, finding the decision on delegates going against them, the Virginians left in a body. All or a part of the delegations from other Southern States followed until a majority of the States was affected, and the President of the Convention, Caleb Cushing, resigned his office.

On the sixth day, June 23, Douglas was nominated by the greatly diminished body, whose sorry claim to represent the National Democratic Party was belied in every respect. The fight had become one against a man presumed to be the favorite of the Nation, and it went further. The struggle for control at Charleston presented to the country the tragedy of the disruption of the great Democratic Party, the only one which could be regarded as national. What followed at Baltimore formed an anti-climax, and Douglas won the coveted honor under conditions that deprived him of all prospect of success.

Fully aware of the differences in the Democratic Party, on May 9 representatives of the old Whigs and Americans opened their convention at Baltimore, and nominated John Bell of Tennessee for President and Edward Everett of Massachusetts for Vice-President, on a platform of 'the Constitution of the Country, the Union of the States, and the enforcement of the laws.' Taking the name of the Constitutional Union Party it sought to gather to itself the conservative element wherever found, those who could not adopt the abolition views of the Republicans or the disunion sentiments of the Southern Democrats. Wholly respectable and well-meaning, it was a party of 'no idea and no purpose,' said the *Springfield Republican*. 'It might as well have taken the multiplication table and the decalogue for its platform as

the Constitution and the Union.'[1] Of little influence in the great political field, it did contribute to defeat Edward Bates at Chicago. The South, through the seceding delegates, named John C. Breckinridge, then Vice-President, and Joseph Lane of Oregon as a third ticket in the field. Thus the Democrats entered the campaign crippled before the battle and divided beyond repair. Douglas had before him the greatest fight of his career.

The Republicans of Illinois held their State Convention at Decatur, May 9, four months after the meeting of the State Democrats and six days after the adjournment of the Charleston Convention. They had seen the difficulties of their opponents and their failure to arrive at even a working agreement for the State campaign. Long John Wentworth had opposed Judd for the governorship, but that incident was not allowed to disturb the even proceedings of the assembly. Naming Richard Yates for governor, the Convention instructed the delegates to the Chicago Convention to vote for Lincoln. Seven or eight of the delegates would gladly have gone for Seward, but there could be no doubt of the loyalty of the four delegates at large — Gustave Koerner, Norman B. Judd, Orville H. Browning, and David Davis. Much remained to be done in the ten days before the opportunity would be given to present Lincoln's name, and no more congenial task could be offered to the four leaders of the Illinois delegation. The doubtful States must be looked after, and States other than Illinois also had candidates, possibly with better claims than those of Lincoln. The call for Seward, too, was to all appearances overwhelming.

Seward had incurred the opposition of Republicans in Pennsylvania. His attacks on the Know-Nothings were remembered against him, and owing to the factional fight between Simon Cameron and Curtin, the nominee for governor, the Pennsylvania delegation to Chicago carried a candidate of its own — Cameron — while Curtin loudly asserted that the nomination of Seward would be the defeat of the Republican Party in Pennsylvania. From elsewhere came charges of inconsistency, of radical opinions on slavery, of inability to carry the doubtful States, of evil associations in politics. His long experience in public life had involved him in many controversies. The Republican minority in the Senate followed him as leader, confiding in his resourcefulness, with occasional doubts on his method. In spite of a strong undercurrent of opposition, in 1860 the party believed the nomination would be given to Seward and he confidently expected to receive it.

The real question about Seward was, as the *Boston Advertiser* said, 'not whether he is more moderate than the majority of his party,

[1] *Life and Times of Samuel Bowles:* George S. Merriam, I, 264.

but whether he is not more extreme than the majority.' [1] His speech in the Senate of February 29, 1860 — 'the coolest speech yet made in Congress' [2] — embodied his claims to the nomination. Its moderation displeased the more ardent, who compared it to Webster's Seventh of March speech, but gratified the conservatives. It was circulated by the thousands. 'The entire speech is as impassive as marble, and as bloodless as a corpse,' said the *Liberator*.[3] Worse still, Seward alienated the Germans, who could see little to choose between him and Bates on a conservative platform.[4] Greeley defended him and found no real contradiction between the Senate and the Rochester speeches, both of which said that liberty and slavery could not exist together and be at peace. In the struggle between them Seward hoped that Slavery would not triumph.

The Seward delegation and followers at Chicago had the best organization, untiring workers who showed no discouragement when met by widespread doubt on their candidate among the delegates of other States. If he did get the nomination, it was asked, could he win the election? Would he not alienate in every State voters who were essential to success — those fearful of his position on slavery, or Americans and old line Whigs, tenacious of their suspicions of radical leadership? To such objections answers were given without removing a sense that weighty obstacles to the eventual success of Seward must be faced. True, the opposition was unorganized and seemingly so divided as to make union on any one name out of the question. From this situation the Seward men drew hope.

Upon their arrival at Chicago the day before the Convention opened, the managers of Lincoln's candidacy sought to bring the opposition to Seward into a combination. Davis, Browning, and 'Tom' Marshall visited in turn the delegations from Maine and New Hampshire on the evening of the fifteenth, to urge their fears that Seward could not carry the Middle West. Accompanied by delegates from Pennsylvania and New Jersey they also called formally on the Massachusetts delegation, explained at length the political situation in Illinois and made a strong appeal for a man less objectionable than Seward. One of the Massachusetts delegates, Ensign H. Kellogg, proposed that each of the visiting delegations should name its preferences. Pennsylvania gave Cameron, Bates and McLean; Illinois, Lincoln, Cameron and Banks; and New Jersey, Dayton, Banks and Lincoln. As thus aligned the prospect of union on one name was not striking and Pennsylvania made no mention of Lincoln. These conferences, without result at the time, served a purpose. Davis and his associates proved their political sagacity. In spreading doubts on Seward, they

[1] *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 3, 1860. Editorial. [2] *Ib.*, March 1, 1860.

[3] *Liberator*, March 16, 1860.

[4] *Boston Pionier*, March 8, 1860.

were preparing to gather the unpledged or floating vote which in every convention awaits a turn to secure some advantage from the victor.

Aid came from others. Henry S. Lane, the Republican candidate for Governor of Indiana, said that with Seward, he and his party would inevitably be defeated, but with Bates, McLean, or Lincoln, they could sweep the State.[1] The German delegates held a meeting, to frame resolutions calling for a plank in the platform demanding perfect equality and protection to all citizens, at home or abroad, and declaring against any extension of the existing term of naturalization, and against any discrimination between native and adopted citizens as voters. They named Chase, Seward, and Lincoln, without expressing a preference, but a large number of Germans in the West leaned strongly to Lincoln. A committee acting in the interest of Bates issued an address giving reasons for nominating him, bearing the signatures of such as the veteran Francis P. Blair, Horace Greeley, and John D. Defrees. It failed of its purpose and produced a reaction in favor of Seward.

The Convention met on May 16 at noon in the Wigwam, a building specially constructed for it, capable of holding ten thousand persons comfortably and of admirable acoustic properties, long a matter of comment and wonder. The city was crowded, all hotels filled to capacity and groups gathered in the streets, exchanging the political talk usual at such times. Twenty-seven States had sent delegations and the Wigwam could accommodate only a fifth part of those wishing to enter. The Border States were represented, but none of the more Southern States except Texas. A call of the roll of the absent members of the Union was greeted with laughter and hisses. David Wilmot, temporary President, made a strong speech against slavery. In the afternoon George Ashmun was made permanent President, proved an excellent presiding officer, but in his speech avoided mention of the negro.

On the second day the platform was laid before the Convention and was adopted as a whole and without discussion. It denounced the Democratic Administration, the threats of disunion, and the 'lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext.' It denied the 'new dogma' that the Constitution, of its own force, carried slavery into the Territories of the United States, and also the authority of Congress, of a territorial legislature, or of any individual, to give legal existence to slavery in any Territory, but was silent on a fugitive slave law. It called for a protective tariff, a complete and satisfactory homestead law, the maintenance of the existing naturalization laws, river and harbor appropriations,

[1] Correspondent New York *Tribune*, Chicago, May 14, 1860.

and government aid to construct a railroad to the Pacific Ocean. 'All the thousands of men in that enormous wigwam commenced swinging their hats, and cheering with intense enthusiasm, and the other thousands of ladies waved their handkerchiefs and clapped their hands. . . . As the great assemblage poured through the streets after adjournment, it seemed to electrify the city.' [1] Balloting would begin on the next day.

In these two days much had been done by the Illinois leaders and with surprising results. It has been seen that they conferred with the delegations of three New England States, and not a little had been learned of the sentiments in other States. The Ohio delegation was so divided as to hold out no hope of unanimity. The majority were for Chase, but a minority had expressed preference for Lincoln and McLean. Pennsylvania was instructed for Cameron, New Jersey for Dayton, and Missouri for Bates. A test of strength came on an attempt to require for a nomination a majority of the whole electoral college of the Union, which would include the votes assigned to States not represented in the Convention. The move originated among those opposed to Seward and was intended to prevent his nomination. By a vote of nearly four to one the proposed rule was defeated and a simple majority of the delegates voting in the Convention substituted for it. That seemed to favor Seward. Near midnight on the 17th, Greeley telegraphed to the New York *Tribune* that Seward would be nominated, and that was the general belief.

On the first ballot Seward received 173½ votes, Lincoln, 102, Cameron, 50½, Chase, 49, and Bates, 48, a result not far from what had been expected by the opponents of Seward. On the second trial Lincoln began to gain, two votes from New Hampshire, ten from Vermont, three from Rhode Island, two from Connecticut, when New York's unbroken seventy for Seward proved a check to the movement. Pennsylvania gave forty-eight to Lincoln and he won enough from other States to place him almost on an equality with Seward, and to indicate the decided trend in his favor. The totals showed 184½ for Seward, 181 for Lincoln, 35 for Bates, and 42½ for Chase. The third ballot proved decisive. Both Chase and Bates dropped out of the running and, with Seward at 180 votes and Lincoln at 231½, within one and one half of winning, it only remained for the yielding of that amount by a State to precipitate the final act of making the nomination unanimous. Ohio led the way and New York handsomely admitted the responsibility resting on the delegation. There was a moment's silence and then the storm broke. Within and without the building there were thousands cheering 'with the energy of insanity.' [2]

This discounts the usual explanation of the contest. Greeley's

[1] Halstead, *Caucuses of 1860*, 139–40.

[2] Halstead, 149.

influence in defeating Seward has been considered potent if not final. We have seen how he had favored Douglas against Lincoln in the senatorial contest of 1858, and on a visit to Illinois towards the end of December, Browning and others had told him some truths on the *Tribune's* 'benevolent attitude' toward Douglas. Four months later he did not believe that the anti-slavery men of the country had either the numbers or the sagacity to make a President. He would be willing to support either Seward or Chase on the platform of 1856, and would work for him 'with a will, but with perfect certainty that we are to be horribly beaten.' [1] Elated by the victories through fusion — the very policy Lincoln and his Republican associates in Illinois had rejected — victories in New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and New Jersey, three of them doubtful States then and to be doubtful States in 1860 — his belief in his political prescience increased. Hence his readiness to support Edward Bates, who had never been a Republican, and whom he had never met or seen. Greeley thought Bates would get votes that no regular Republican could get — another fusion idea. Naturally Seward held a second place in his calculations.

Another motive had influenced him. Because of the dispute after the Convention, on Greeley's part in the result, there appeared on June 14 a petulant letter of Greeley, written six years earlier, in which he parted company with Thurlow Weed and Seward on the ground that they had been lukewarm in pushing his political ambitions. He had not, however, made public his personal opposition to Seward before joining with Blair and others in support of Bates. Weed held that Greeley should have given earlier notice of his hostility, but Greeley replied that it was through no fault of his that Seward was defeated. Henry J. Raymond, editor of the New York *Times*, gave an 'inside history' of the Convention and asserted that Greeley had been ten times more effective against Seward than 'the whole family of Blairs, together with all the gubernatorial candidates.' [2] The charge, good in a heated campaign, was hardly proved, though it could not be denied that the opposition of Greeley had made itself felt in the result. Raymond himself admitted that the nomination of Lincoln was 'purely an accident,' decided far more by the shouts and applause of the vast assemblage than by any direct labors of the delegates.[3]

There remains the charge that Lincoln secured the nomination through pledges made by Judge Davis to obtain the votes of Indiana and Pennsylvania. A delegation instructed to vote for one candidate must use its discretion in the Convention to transfer its support to another on discovering that its favorite has no chance of winning. Indiana had no candidate of its own and was believed to have a ma-

[1] Greeley to Baker, April 28, 1859. Weed, II, 255.

[2] Weed, II, 274. [3] *Ib.*, 273–4.

jority of its members favorable to Lincoln. Caleb B. Smith, a delegate at large from that State, seconded the nomination of Lincoln, and Indiana cast its full vote for him on the first ballot and made no change in the second and third. Henry S. Lane is represented as going from one caucus room to another, after midnight on the morning of the eighteenth, 'toiling with desperation to bring the Indiana delegation to go as a unit for Lincoln.' [1] Some weeks later Lincoln admitted to Smith that he was 'much indebted to Indiana; and, as my home friends tell me, much to you personally.' [2] There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the Indiana vote was obtained by the promise of a cabinet appointment to Smith, but not enough to prove it.

With Pennsylvania the probability of such a promise becomes so strong as to be almost conclusive. From the factional fight in that State Simon Cameron had won the lead in the delegation to Chicago and an endorsement of his own candidacy for the Presidency, and from Pennsylvania came an insistent plea for a plank in the platform calling for a protective tariff. If that was obtained the Republican Party in Pennsylvania cared little who should be nominated at Chicago, but much for success at home. Leonard Swett, in an account of the acts of the Illinois leaders, wrote: 'The Seward men were laboring with delegates from that State [Pennsylvania], and so were friends of Mr. Lincoln, and both were hopeful; but in the small hours of Friday morning [the 18th], in a room of the Tremont House, two of Mr. Lincoln's friends and two of Mr. Cameron's being present, our arguments prevailed, and the Cameron men agreed to come to us on the second ballot. They did so right nobly.' [3] To Cameron was given a place in the Cabinet, a price that soon involved Lincoln in difficulties pregnant with disaster.[4]

Lincoln accepted the nomination and platform without reservation and, unlike Douglas, he took no part in the campaign. The vote in November gave Lincoln a victory which did not equal the high pitched estimates of eager party managers but which did give everything that could be needed. The popular vote for Lincoln was 1,866,452; for Douglas, 1,376,957; for Breckinridge, 849,781; and for Bell, 588,879. The fatal divisions in the Democratic Party, but for which it would have won a sweeping victory, placed the Republicans in power, on a strictly sectional basis of North against South. In

[1] Halstead, 142.

[2] Lincoln to Caleb B. Smith, May 26, 1860. *Works*, VI, 21.

[3] In Weed, II, 292. Koerner, II, 114, gives quite another story on Cameron's appointment.

[4] Early in January, 1861, George W. Julian went to Springfield to protest against admitting Smith and Cameron to the Cabinet. Lincoln admitted that the rumor of their appointment was true, but that he 'felt bound by the pledges which his leading friends had made in his name pending the National Convention.' *Political Recollections:* George W. Julian, 183.

1856 Buchanan had carried nineteen States and Frémont only eleven. Maryland stood alone in its loyalty to Fillmore. Two States — Minnesota and Oregon — with seven electoral votes were admitted before 1860, and both joined the Republican column. Lincoln carried eighteen Northern States, having one hundred and eighty electoral votes, Breckinridge, eleven Southern States, with seventy-two votes, and Bell, three Border States, with thirty-nine votes, almost reversing the relation of votes of 1856. Douglas had the nine votes of Missouri and three from New Jersey. Dearly had he paid for his rebellion against the administration and party discipline.

In such manner the course of events placed Lincoln in the highest place in the gift of the people of the North. Out of the tangle of policies, of parties and of their struggles, out of forty years of the approach of the slavery question to a crisis, stepped a man but little known beyond his own State, of little experience in public life, and of no experience as an executive. Described as a 'country lawyer,' an eloquent stump speaker, and a skilful politician, he possessed the engaging qualities of patience, frankness, honesty, and consistent caution which inspired confidence among the conservative, and it was the day of the conservative. The candidate of expediency, an 'accident' in gaining the place of standard-bearer, voted on by only a section of the country, and not winning a popular plurality, he stood quite alone. Knowing few of the leading public characters of the day, not possessing the unquestioning support of a large number of those who had voted for him, and, as a Black Republican, giving occasion to the secession of the South from the Union, he had need of the highest human qualities to meet the situation. His ignorance of the serious nature of the crisis was no greater than that of others better equipped and more experienced. He had mastered the principles underlying the dispute over slavery, but that dispute had produced a threat of rebellion. What of the future?

The story of the origin and development of this man has been told in these volumes. Out of the most unpromising materials — almost out of nothing — emerges a figure pathetic in its loneliness, inscrutable in its silences and reserves. Lincoln stands at the closed door of the future, armed by his party with instructions to prevent the extension of slavery, and to maintain inviolate the rights of the States, 'and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively.' There we leave him, about to undergo the supreme test of ruling a people in a time of civil war.

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